Commentary

Volume Sixty-nine, Number Four, April 1980

SOVIET GLOBAL STRATEGY

RICHARD PIPES

AFTER AFGHANISTAN, WHAT?

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

AMERICA FIVE YEARS AFTER DEFEAT

CHARLES HORNER

In Defense of Camp David — Alan Dowty

Gospel and Midrash — Hyam Maccoby

Music: On the Air — Samuel Lipman

Fiction: A Remarkable First Novel — Pearl K. Bell

Books: Eric M. Breindel / David Singer / Murray Friedman / Mark Falcoff/Naomi Decter

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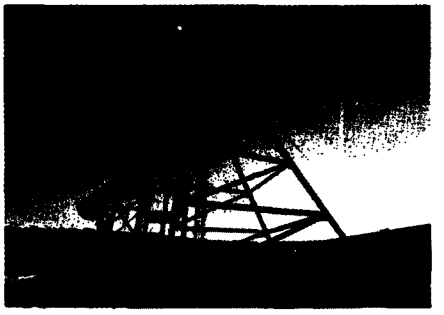
"We got this oil by cooking rocks."

"Cooking isn't exactly the right word," says Gulf engineer John Selters. "Actually we heat the rock – oil shale – to about 900°F. The heat releases a kind of oil called kerogen. The idea is to refine the kerogen and use it instead of petroleum.



"The oil shale is mined 800 feet down."

"There are huge oil shale deposits in America. According to some calculations, these deposits contain as much oil as there is in the Middle East.

"Gulf and another oil company are equal partners in a project in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, to make shale oil a practical alternative to expensive imported crude oil.

"It's a costly proposition. We're still at the development stage and production is years away. But we'll need the oil then even more than we do now.

"Of course Gulf is still working hard to find and produce all the domestic petroleum and natural gas we can. But we're also working hard on alternatives. Oil shale is just one of many. It takes energy to produce energy, and at Gulf we're giving it our best shot."

Gulf

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Gulf Oil Corporation

"The liquid is shale oil. The rock is oil shale."

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We're willing to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to bring you gasoline from oil shale before the end of the 80's.

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Over 120 permits just to get started

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When regulation gets to the point where it obscures the original purpose—in this case, developing new American energy—then it's time to put things back in perspective. America can't afford to drag its feet any longer. Foreign oil is becoming more expensive by the month and continues to threaten the security of our country.

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America runs better on American oil.

AMOCO

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Commentary

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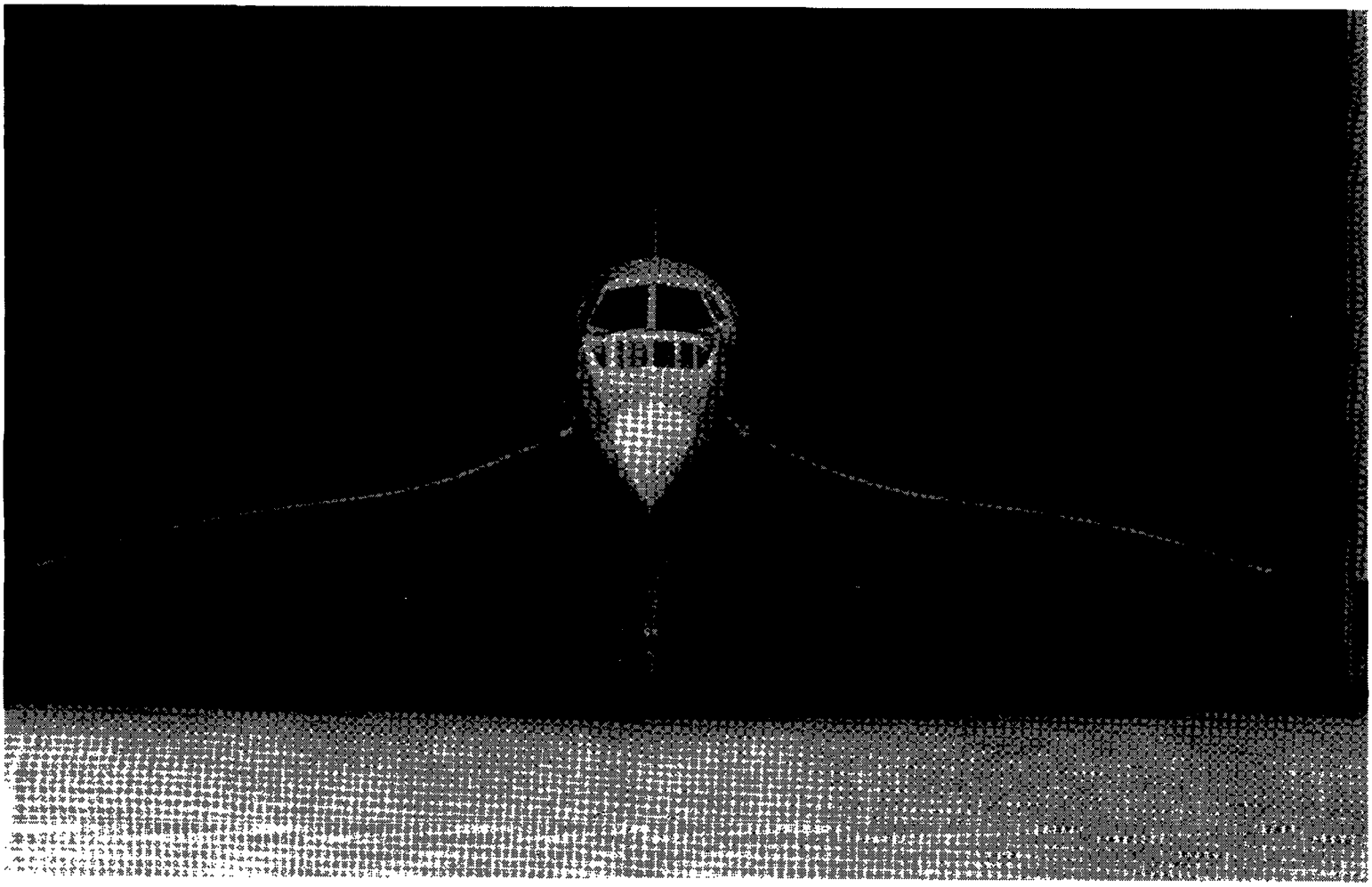

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In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

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Letters from Readers

Liberalism & the Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

To one who is not Jewish, the symposium, "Liberalism & the Jews" [January], is extremely stimulating. The assumptions of some of the respondents are fascinating.

1. Some contributors argue that liberalism is good for the poor and minorities; therefore, for the Jews. Is liberalism good for the poor in 1980? Even Nixon became a Keynesian. But Keynesianism no longer seems to work. State-induced inflation hurts the poor and minorities disproportionately. The version of liberalism that veers off into socialism breeds dependency and resentment, not cooperativeness and fraternity; devices of group entitlement, not individual effort; and theories that blame "society" for every ill, not individual responsibility. If the Anglo-Saxon individualism of 19th-century liberalism was naive and overly optimistic about the moral behavior of individuals, the socialism of 20th-century liberalism has proved to be equally naive about the moral behavior of collectivities.

2. Some overlook the two transformations that have occurred within liberalism during our lifetime. Edward Shils correctly diagnoses the first transformation, induced by the New Deal: the move from liberalism based on the individual to "collectivistic liberalism." The second transformation occurred during the 1960's with the "radicalization" of the Left, composed of an attack upon "corporate liberalism" through vague theories about "imperialism" and "internal colonialism." The civil-rights movement, the anti-war movement, feminism, gay-rights groups, and other exponents of the "New Politics" embodied this second transformation.

It is most astonishing to read Irving Howe, Michael Walzer, Balfour Brickner, and several others in the symposium who seem to write as if neither of these transformations had occurred; or as though they were natural extensions of earlier forms of liberalism; or as though such transformations called for no substantial rethinking. Mr. Howe is most disingenuous in treating the "welfare state" as though it were a defensive liberal reaction rather than a piecemeal, progressive experiment in socialism, and in rejecting the welfare state as a failure in favor of still more extensive experiments in socialism. One wonders what, in his eyes, would ever count as a failure for socialism. Perhaps he means by "socialism" nothing empirically falsifiable.

3. A number of writers argue, and not only by innuendo and tone, that Jews have been particularly admirable because they continue to cling to liberalism even after their own personal success has lifted them out of the "life situation" which makes liberalism serve their interests. Whose interests, then, does currently transformed liberalism actually serve? If liberalism does not serve the interests of most Jews, are Jews really admirable for supporting it? In personal life, disinterested charity is admirable. In politics, it is subject to grotesque ironies, tragedies, and tyrannies.

Reinhold Niebuhr argued that the characteristic flaw of the Protestant upper class was moral cant: its refusal to distinguish clearly between its real interests and the blinding light of its own moralistic rhetoric. Are Jews now acquiring that fault? Niebuhr used "liberalism" as a term of reproach, indicting precisely its self-deceiving moral idealism. Some of COMMENTARY's fifty-two symposiasts seem to recommend such vices to Jews, under the banner of superior moral sensitivity.

4. Several writers dismiss the support of Republicans like Connally and Reagan for grossly ethnic reasons. They don't, some write, "feel comfortable" among Republicans. Such feelings of "discomfort" were often used by others as reasons not to hire, promote, or include our parents and grandparents: "They wouldn't feel comfortable here." In a pluralistic society, such feelings deserve rigorous examination. Unexamined ethnic feelings are not sufficient reason for rejecting Republicans who are Protestants of the South or the West. Indeed, some of COMMENTARY's contributors speak of "oil companies" and "corporations" as ethnic enemies. Such thoughts, too, bear critical examination.

Still, this symposium suggests that the nation is further along in its intellectual unmasking of "col-

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lectivistic liberalism" than one had imagined. That this is so among Jewish intellectuals is especially important because Jewish experience once helped to make "social democracy" a plausible and attractive political ideal. The reconsideration of social democracy as a political dream alters the contours of the American political imagination.

The individualism of 19th-century Anglo-American liberalism was not enough. The socialism of 20th-century collectivistic liberalism is not enough. What, then, comes next? Something new is being born, and not only among COMMENTARY's fifty-two contributors and its many thousands of readers.

MICHAEL NOVAK
American Enterprise Institute
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Irving Howe is certainly unhappy with COMMENTARY. He should, however, be more careful when he states that the distinction between affirmative action and quotas is "habitually denied or minimized in COMMENTARY." He does not mention specific articles or editorial comment in the magazine to support his statement.

I am an avid reader of COMMENTARY. The articles specifically dealing with the *Bakke* and *Weber* cases have indeed made the distinction between affirmative action and quotas. Affirmative action—the weighing of cultural, economic, and educational deprivations, along with other factors such as grades, test scores, etc., in the selection process, to help candidates—has been applauded. Quotas—the setting aside of a number of places in a class, or in a job selection, for a particular minority, or minorities, without regard to other factors—have been condemned, quite correctly, as against the interests of Jews.

Mr. Howe further charges that COMMENTARY has been engaged in a campaign to "meld quotas and affirmative action." I think that this is untrue. The articles in COMMENTARY have distinguished between the two; affirmative action is good, but quotas are bad. It is Mr. Howe who is attempting to meld the two into one, implying that liberal support for quotas, in many instances, can be interpreted as support for affirmative action. The two are not compatible and to the extent that liberals support quotas, Jews should be opposed.

I am active in the American Jewish Committee. The Committee has made a distinction between affirmative action, which it supports, and quotas, to which it objects, although it has not always in discussing this difference been as vocal as I would like. It did not file a brief in the *Weber* case, for example, which I consider to be wrong. However, it has been consistent. The articles in COMMENTARY have been consistent. Affirmative action is proper; quotas are bad. Liberals are right if they support affirmative action; they are wrong if they support quotas. There is no broad conflict that exists, so far as I am aware, between the American Jewish Committee, other Jewish organizations, and COMMENTARY with regard to the distinction between affirmative action and quotas.

Mr. Howe should know that there is indeed a vast difference between the two concepts. Liberals should certainly be condemned by all Jews, including Mr. Howe, when they support quotas. I would not, nor do I think Mr. Howe would want, the Irving Howes of the future to be denied access to positions as editors or writers because the "Jewish quota" has been filled.

PHILIP J. SCHILLER
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his contribution to the symposium, my good friend, Daniel Bell, expresses his unhappiness with the phrase "totalitarian liberal" as evidence of "the times when language loses its clear and distinct meanings." Of course, not all the meanings of language are clear and distinct, but, as the author of that phrase, I used it to designate a phenomenon that was far from clear and distinct. (It is in fact as legitimate as the use of the expressions "hateful love" and "friendly enmity" in some situations.) In the context in which it was used, the *meaning* of the phrase was clear enough and far from puzzling. It referred to individuals

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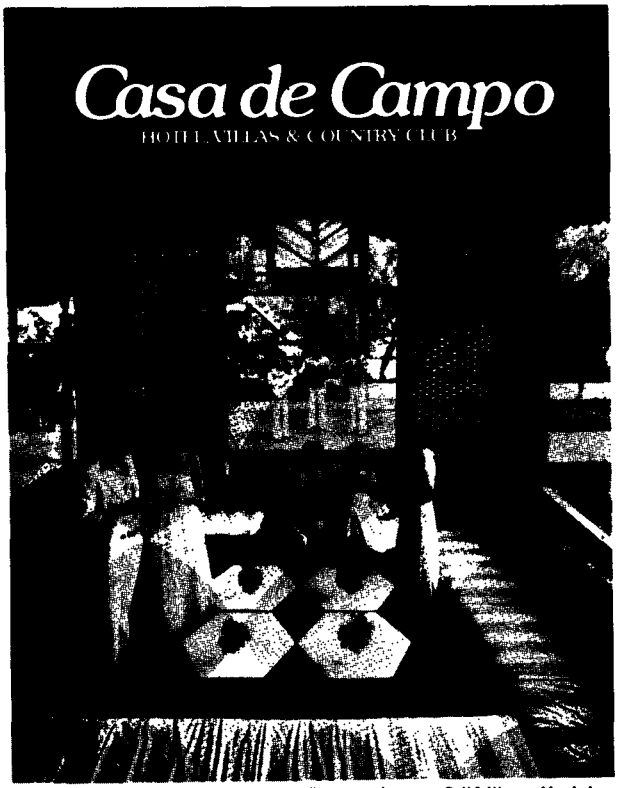

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WANTED: HOMES FOR UNWANTED CHILDREN

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Viewers responded in the best way possible. To date, they have adopted 25 of the 41 children introduced on "Wednesday's Child." Nine are in the process of being adopted and only seven are still waiting to be placed. In addition, 42 other "hard to place" children not shown on the programs were adopted by viewers who responded and called in.

And the program is spreading. Child welfare agencies and stations in other states have inquired about the series. Hopefully, many more children will find new lives.

All of us at Gannett are proud of KOCO and her sister stations. Their efforts symbolize the things Gannett is most proud of: professional excellence and a total commitment to strong, independent service to the community.

At Gannett, we have a commitment to freedom in every business we're in, whether it's newspaper, TV, radio, outdoor advertising, film production, magazine or public opinion research.

That freedom rings throughout Gannett, from Lansing to Little Rock, from Phoenix to Pensacola, from Rochester to Reno, in news coverage, in editorial opinions, in community service. Each member serves its own audience in its own way.

GANNETT

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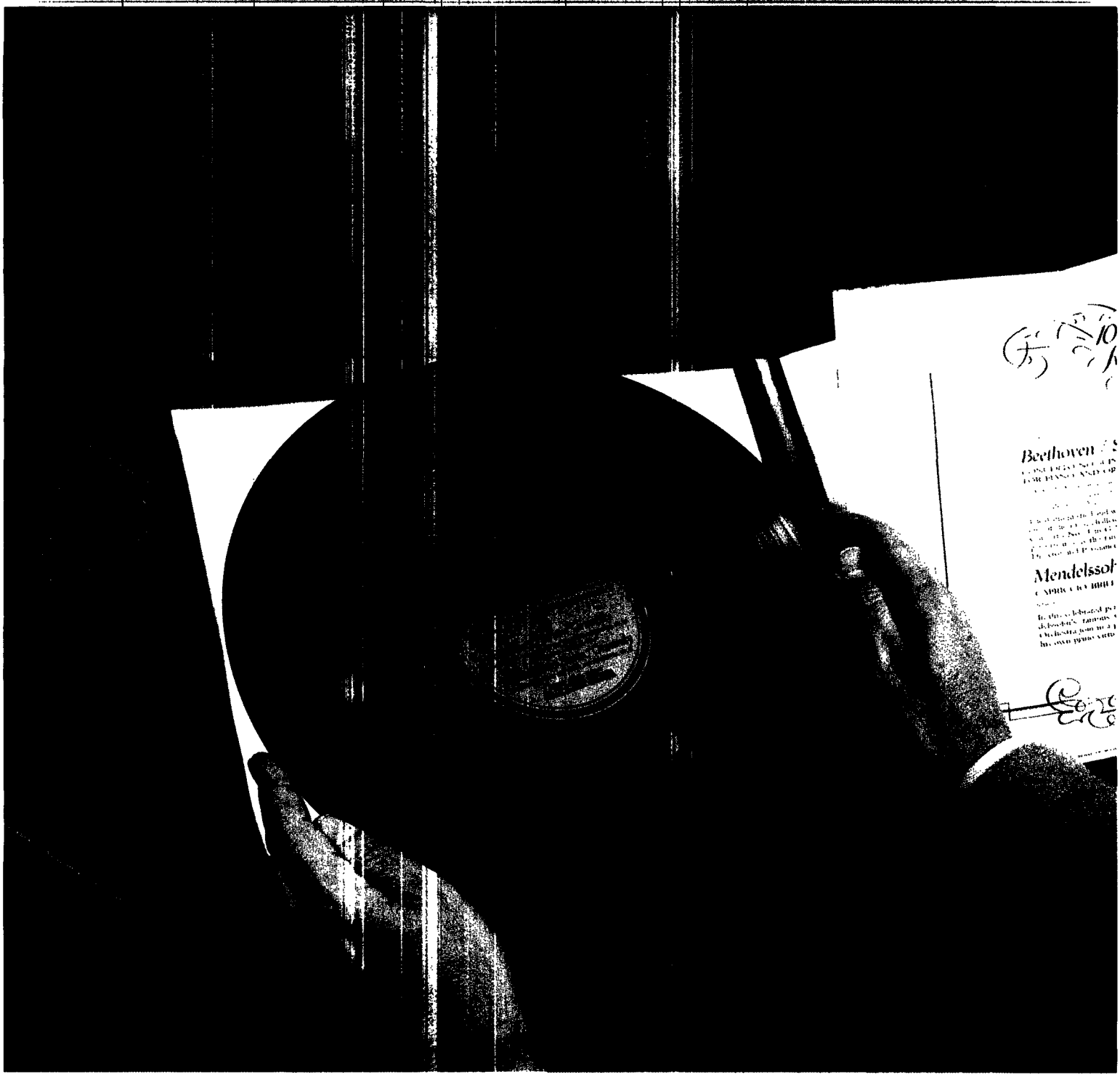

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who professed allegiance to the principles of liberalism but who condoned or apologized for the terroristic practices of the Soviet Union in its domestic and foreign policy. It first came into use at the time of the Moscow trials and was applied to individuals who had protested the Reichstag fire trial as a frame-up but who endorsed the Moscow trials, despite the much more convincing evidence of falsifications. Subsequently it was used to characterize persons who as liberals denounced injustices in democratic and non-Communist countries but persistently refused to condemn even greater violations of human rights under Communist regimes.

Mr. Bell is mistaken in his claim that the phrase was "used to deride the Left." It was used only by members of the Left to criticize those who, professing to be liberals, betrayed the principles of liberalism. The expression was found only in the pages of the *New Leader*, the *Socialist Call*, and *Partisan Review*. Even *Time* magazine (February 17, 1947), in reprinting excerpts from an article of mine in the 40's under the title of "Totalitarian Liberalism," recognized this.

Finally, the appropriate use of oxymorons both in poetry and prose need have no corrupting influence on the ethics of words. When I say that Harold J. Laski was "a smart, silly man" every intelligent person who knows the details of his life will know what I mean. I am not saying that smart *is* silly, etc. When Orwell, with justification, accused the Kremlin of semantic corruption, it was not because the Communists *said* that dictatorship *is* democracy, peace *is* war, freedom *is* slavery, but because they used the words democracy, peace, and freedom in such a way as to denote their precise opposites in ordinary usage.

SIDNEY HOOK
Hoover Institution
on War, Revolution, and Peace
Stanford, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Of all the responses in the symposium, I found Neal Kozodoy's the most acute. I do not know who made the remark he quotes—"We [Jews] live between the rock of the powerful and the hard place of the powerless, and survive by learning how to slither"—but I know at least fifty intellectuals, rabbis, and "leaders" who are capable of having made it. . . . The attitude it represents is, indeed, a menace to Jewish survival.

Irving Howe comments that Jews may be becoming less liberal as they become more well-to-do—has no one told Mr. Howe about radical chic? My experience is that the people on the lower rung of the economic ladder—and there are some Jews among them—share the attitudes, more and more, of other ethnic groups. It is mainly the well-to-do, who are unthreatened by affirmative action, quotas, etc.—like Mr. Howe himself, for example—who are gung-ho for liberalism these days. Let justice be done though the heavens fall—after all, they won't fall on me—would seem to define their attitude rather nicely. . . .

NORMA FREEDMAN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed the January issue very much, especially the trenchant statements of Arnold Beichman. . . . With events having . . . eroded the appeal of both Carter and Kennedy over the past many months, I have been wondering for quite a while why the brains of the Democratic party have not started the ball rolling for Senator Moynihan—and now here is Mr. Beichman expressing my thoughts exactly. . . .

SAM PARKER
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . If one is honest and realistic, it is very easy to see that liberalism today is a failure. Liberalism is confined mostly to the Democratic party and most Jews are Democrats. Then why do they support failure? Why should Jews give their allegiance to a political party that no longer serves their best interests? Why are Jews the biggest financial contributors to the Democrats and yet have very little political power in this party? Blacks, whose financial contributions to the Democrats are negligible in comparison to Jews, have far more political power. A case in point: time after time, Andrew Young embarrassed Carter and his administration, yet look how long it took to get him removed from his UN post. But when Bella Abzug made one statement in opposition, she was immediately fired. I am using Mrs. Abzug as a comparison, even though I am certainly not one of her supporters. . . .

Seymour Siegel . . . gives Jews some good advice: part company with the Democrats as soon as possible. . . . I respect and admire Rita E. Hauser for her good judgment and realistic viewpoint. . . . I would also like to praise Midge Decter for her great response. . . .

TED KAPLAN
Glencoe, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Ellen Willis tells us that she views things from a radical perspective, and then goes on to support affirmative-action programs. Yet affirmative action is based on the "hard-line anti-egalitarian position" that the only way to obtain wealth is through medicine, business, or certain other selected professions. Affirmative action in effect legitimizes poverty and inequality by saying that wealth (and therefore poverty) should be evenly distributed among the races, sexes, and ethnic groups. Affirmative action may succeed in getting a few middle-class blacks into medical school, but there is no conceivable way it can improve the lot of the welfare class and the underclass. If this is radicalism, it certainly resembles conservatism.

There are other ways in which the Left resembles the Right. As Miss Willis has stated elsewhere, "Leftsts regularly disparage concern for feminism, gay rights, sexual liberation, and personal freedom as frivolous or even reactionary" (*Village Voice*, December 3, 1979). Only in a democratic, liberal society can personal freedom exist. Similarly, rightists and leftists have been open to anti-Semitism. Rightists invented anti-Jewish quotas because they believe in hereditary privilege. Leftists hope to preserve such quotas because Marxism, like all daughter religions of Judaism, is inherently anti-Jewish. If Miss Willis continues to advocate personal freedom and to oppose anti-Semitism, she should not remain a radical.

GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ
College of Staten Island
Staten Island, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nat Hentoff says Israel will have to negotiate, or try to, with the PLO, which he calls a "collection of murderers," because peace is made with the enemy. But if one sides with Israel, one does not tell Israel to negotiate with its murderers. One tells the murderers to stop killing Jews.

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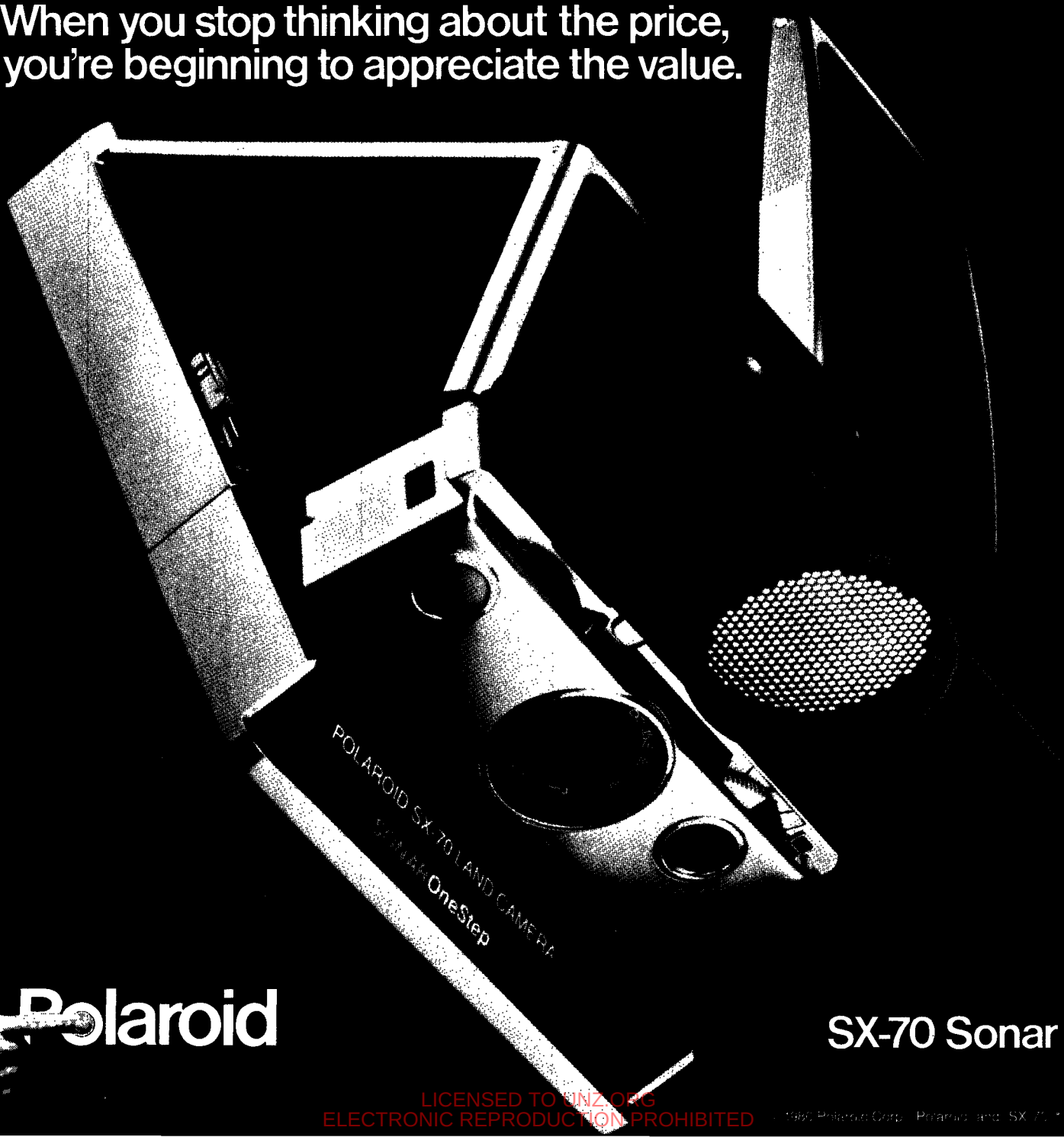

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2 The hotline is just the most recent expression of our long-standing concern. If you want to know what information we have about you on file, just ask. If you tell us something's wrong, we'll reinvestigate and respond. As to Æconomaster, it not only offers lower premiums to start with, it can lower them even further when interest rates go up—a hedge against inflation.

3 Our studies so far show that about half of you think the traditional rating criteria are unfair. When told that new criteria could mean more money out of your pocket, however, only about a third still thought change was a good idea. In the real world, decisions often involve some tradeoff between costs and benefits. What we have here are two problems to solve at once.

4 Ætna recognizes we've helped fuel rising costs by selling health insurance that doesn't always give the consumer a reason to be concerned about them. Deductibles and co-insurance while effective aren't always popular. Unfortunately we too often give the customer what he wants without looking at the tradeoffs. We also haven't done enough to educate people to take better care of themselves or know when they're sick. Prevention is still cheaper than treatment.

5 It's now company policy to invite representatives from groups like the National Consumers' League up to Hartford. And Ætna now has 21 of its own consumer representatives who respond to your questions, suggestions, and complaints—somewhat unusual for an industry that's spent the last hundred years mostly listening to itself.

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When Mr. Hentoff was in the anti-war movement during the Vietnam war, he did not tell Hanoi to negotiate with the U.S. because peace is made with the enemy. To one side alone he said just two words: out now—and it worked. . . .

RALPH KESSLER
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations on the fine and stimulating issue on "Liberalism & the Jews." I do, however, have one question: is Tom Hayden a friend of Israel, as Leonard Fein assumes, or is he hostile to Israel, as Jack Newfield maintains?,

There seems to be some confusion among the "liberal" symposiasts as to who is a friend and who is not.

NESHA ROTHFIELD
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I never feel I know all sides of a question until it has been treated in COMMENTARY. Accordingly, I very much enjoyed the symposium on liberalism—with one exception: I want to know what Leon Wieseltier means when he says, "No country on earth has been better to the Jews than the United States; but it is not our country." I am shocked and outraged on behalf of my Jewish friends. . . .

GENE K. BRUCE
San Mateo, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mere sentiment in favor of Israel is not enough to make an American politician necessarily "good for Israel." Stephen Solarz and Elizabeth Holtzman are mentioned by various contributors as examples of pro-Israel Congressmen who opposed every suggestion of aid to anti-Soviet forces in Africa and Asia, even though the steady growth of Soviet power is clearly bad for Israel. . . .

Several contributors indicate disillusionment with the Democratic party, but state that the Republican party would be ethnically and culturally uncongenial. To me, this is a self-fulfilling prophecy and one that is at best obsolescent. Surely if Jews refrain from participating in Republican politics they will feel like an out-of-place minority. But it has been my own personal experience that the barriers of the past are in fact gone. . . .

BENJAMIN NEUHAUSEN
Rye, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

COMMENTARY's symposium, "Liberalism & the Jews," offers many excellent insights. But a collection of illuminating observations does not add up to enlightenment. The symposium suffers from the weakness of its design. Because it is not an actual exchange of ideas among the symposiasts, its success depends entirely on the validity and precision of the questions asked about Jews and American politics. As many of the respondents take pains to say, the questions were more bogs to avoid than terrain to explore.

For one thing, the terms of the key question (about liberalism) were so vague and slippery as to reduce the answers to exercises in definition. Three decades ago, when, with the onset of the cold war, we went through the great disputation about "liberalism" and "conservatism," we discovered that, in the American context, the words had at best a relative, elusive meaning and that using them could only becloud questions and muddle answers. Moreover, the words liberal and conservative have at best a partial applicability to the American political scene; no American party has ever been called by either name; both major parties have always been agglomerations of groups and interests having "liberal" and "conservative" wings, and even these terms had particular connotations for particular issues.

Secondly: . . . the specific items of the "liberal agenda" were misnamed. . . . The list of items could, with greater candor, have [been] reduced to what seemed to be most troubling to the editors: does the confrontation between Jewish and black groups and interests mean that Jews should reconsider their role as "liberals"? By one route or another, all the details of the "agenda" led back to this single issue. Inevitably one could not help asking whether "liberalism" does not transcend this issue and whether the Jewish American political role does not embrace other sets of relations and concerns. Of course, many respondents broke out of the tight little witness box to which they had been consigned, but it took no small effort on their part to do so.

A third reservation: . . . the roster of respondents represents only a certain slice of Jewish American life. We have, moreover, been meeting [these] personages . . . for the past three or four decades. All too many of the erstwhile bright young men of the Jewish intellectual establishment are, however much we may regret it, slouching toward senescence, and we cannot pretend that a Jewish colloquy can remain vital and relevant if it proceeds from one decade to the next with a largely unvarying assembly of colloquialists. Surely, there must be other voices, other Jews—and if indeed not, then the most important question of all: why not? . . .

A. S. EISENSTADT
Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The liberalism which most of the writers in the symposium look nostalgically back to seems little more than whatever it might be that made Sammy run and made it worth his while. The political ideal in that version of liberalism is one of negative government: intervention only where the individual—whom we are to take as given—is violated. This principle is coupled with a conception of human nature as self-sufficient and assertive—yielding the messianic ideal that everything will be just fine if only people are left alone. No busing, no quotas, a strong police force but no corporate government, and a fortress America (including Israel) to make sure that foreigners don't gum up the works.

The unlovely portrait is familiar; at its most benign, John Stuart Mill chatting up Thoreau at Walden Pond. Close behind and less benignly, the farmer Hobbes who took to growing politics when he discovered that life in the Garden of Eden was nasty and brutish and, most of all, short.

What does any of this have to do with the Jews or Jewish history? About as much as does Marx's portrait of the Jew as the archetypal capitalist. What does it have to do with principles of social justice? About as much as does Adam Smith's now very visible hand. Strange bedfellows. But then, I suppose, that's politics.

BEREL LANG
University of Connecticut
Storrs, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is neither surprising nor especially interesting that so many of COMMENTARY's distinguished contributors ring the changes on the same theme: liberalism in the

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1930's was the only possible ideological home not only for Jews but for anyone of humane disposition because liberalism in those days was the embodiment of *good*—but came the wicked 60's and somehow all that goodness was subjected, as Marc F. Plattner states, to "unseemly disintegration."

What I do find exceedingly interesting is that *not one* of your contributors seems to have considered it even remotely possible that what has happened in recent years, far from being a departure from New Deal liberalism, is in woeful fact its inexorable, inevitable result.

What is astonishing to me is that so many articulate, obviously intelligent, and sophisticated people can still be so naive. Consider Mr. Plattner's formulation: New Deal liberalism, . . . he tells us, was characterized by "support for the welfare state, strong labor unions, a mixed economy with a healthy private sector, and economic growth; by sympathy toward the interests of ethnic and racial minorities; by an anti-fascist and then an anti-Communist foreign policy; and by a concern for preserving and fostering liberal democratic regimes and principles abroad." I concede . . . that Mr. Plattner sincerely believes he has painted a true picture, but what baffles me is *how* he can still cling to his belief in the face of overwhelming evidence that his picture is incomplete and distorted.

Thus the welfare state, like so many other liberal sacred cows, is self-evidently good and humane. No matter that so many programs sponsored by liberals in the name of welfare were and are wasteful, trivial, and ineffective; no matter that practices they have promulgated and perpetuated encourage welfare recipients to be devious and non-welfare taxpayers to be contemptuous; no matter that liberals have failed ruinously to check dependency and promote self-reliance.

The liberals' support of strong labor unions was not necessarily bad. But their determined disregard for—and, frequently, outright hostility to—individual freedom and individual rights was and is an abominable disloyalty to "the noblest aspects of the American political tradition."

That liberals were "for" a mixed economy is scarcely open to debate; but that they were, in the same positive sense, "for" a healthy private sector and economic growth is nowhere evident. They did indeed blithely assume that the goose would go on laying golden eggs. But that in no way hindered them from constantly telling the goose that it was ugly, selfish, heartless, and too fat, or from actively seeking opportunities to clip the goose's wings, pluck off its feathers, and restrict its rations.

True, liberals showed sympathy toward *some* ethnic and racial minorities. But it is also true that they had no compunction about manifesting vindictive contempt for the minorities they disliked. . . .

Would that it were true that liberals in general supported both an anti-fascist *and* an anti-Communist foreign policy. Liberal anti-Communists, then as now, have been a disgracefully rare honorable exception. . . . For far too many liberals, yesterday and today, the watchword has been *"pas d'ennemis à gauche."*

TIBOR KEREKES, JR.
Fairfield, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The contributors to your symposium do not appear . . . to show much respect or sympathy for the humane conservatism of Middle America. The liberal contributors apparently think that all conservatives are aristocratic Wasps or presidents of oil companies. The more conservative contributors are mostly reacting against contemporary liberalism rather than trying to understand contemporary conservatism. It does not seem to occur to anyone that between the coasts there are millions of working-class and middle-class Americans who are conservative out of a genuine belief in the fundamental decency of America's traditional institutions and values.

Those in the Jewish community who assume that these people are somehow more benighted or more insensitive to human suffering than their more liberal compatriots are simply wrong. If conservatives oppose many of the so-called reforms of the liberal elite it is because of their conviction that the harm done by big government outweighs any possible gains. (In this respect they are closer to the original liberal tradition of Jefferson than are those who call themselves liberals nowadays.) However, conservatives will support programs that are designed actually to help disadvantaged people get on their feet rather than to prolong dependence upon government largesse.

The Jewish community is also losing valuable political opportunities due to its parochialism toward heartland conservatism. It is absurd for some Jewish leaders to imply, as some in the symposium do, that American conservatives are closet anti-Semites. Conservatives are inspired by the political traditions of Jefferson and Lincoln and by the ethical teachings of the Bible, not by the medieval dogmatism which motivated the Czarist pogromists. It is precisely because conservatives still hark back to an identifiable system of ethics that they are likely to remain the staunchest supporters of Israel in the future. The enormous good will manifested by conservatives toward Israel arises out of a respect for the democratic and humane nature of the Jewish state, a respect which can only be manifested by people still able to distinguish right from wrong.

AARON H. HOSTYK
Columbus, Ohio

The Holocaust

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There is one point in Walter Laqueur's generally excellent article, "Jewish Denial & the Holocaust" [December 1979], that I would like to take issue with. In his remarks about the existence of emissaries of the various Jewish organizations in unoccupied Europe, such as the Zionists and the Joint Distribution Committee, he notes, "the Orthodox religious groups had their own small network, *keeping their distance from the rest*" (emphasis added). This assertion is not borne out by the facts. On the contrary, the Orthodox followed a clear-cut policy, reinforced by a religious ruling, which emphasized cooperation with anyone involved in the urgent task of relief and rescue. Not only did the Orthodox join others in such activities, but they also initiated a number of important cooperative ventures. Nevertheless, there were many instances when the Orthodox did "go it alone," but not from a lack of willingness to cooperate. Rather, they did so in the face of much opposition by the American Jewish establishment because of a totally divergent point of view. While the latter adopted a totally "legalistic" stance, the Orthodox were willing to go beyond the law when the lives of the Jewish people were at stake. A few ex-

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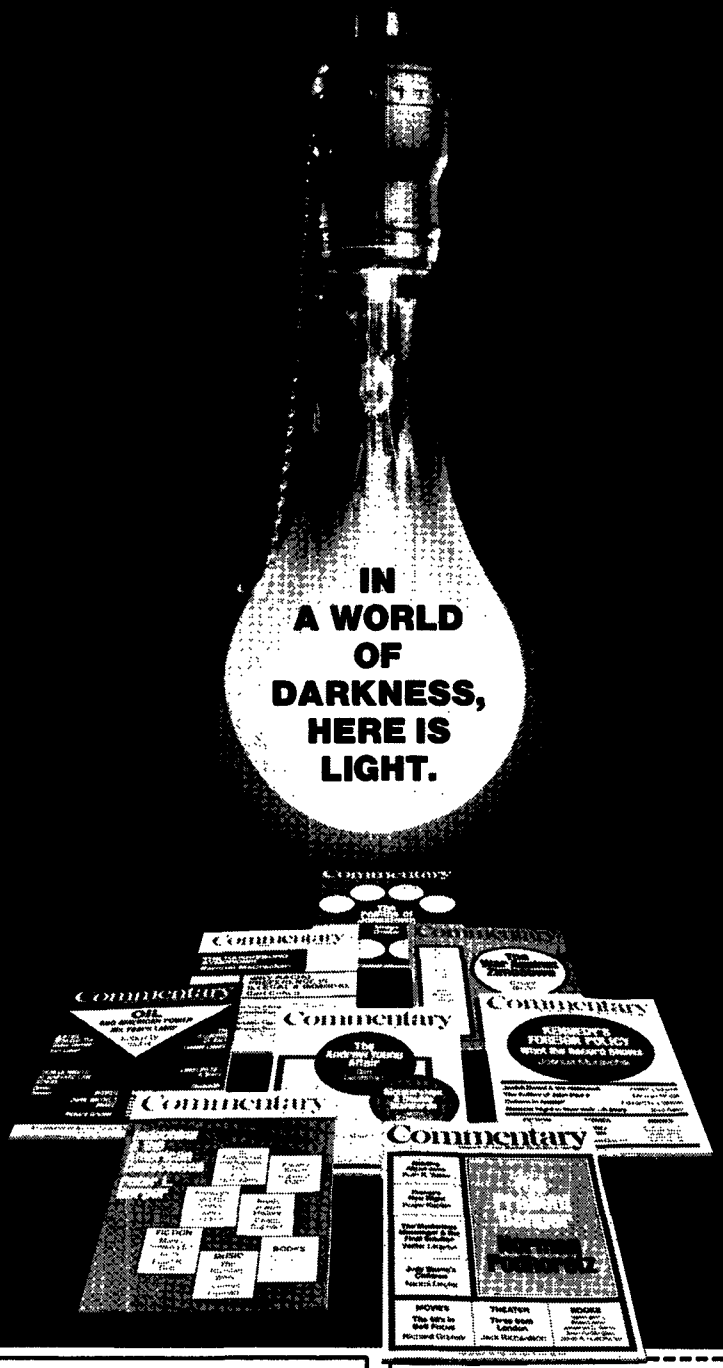

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amples will illustrate these points. (These are fully detailed and documented in my forthcoming volume, *Thy Brother's Blood: The Orthodox Jewish Response to the Holocaust*.)

The Orthodox, by which is meant their two primary organizations involved in relief and rescue, the Vaad Hatzalah (the Rescue Committee of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis) and Agudath Israel, not only cooperated closely among themselves—not always an easy task—but worked actively with anyone involved in relief and rescue of Jews during the period of the Holocaust.

This held true of the parent organizations in New York and of their affiliates and emissaries in England, Switzerland, Turkey, Sweden, or Eretz Israel. All the documentation fully substantiates the fact that they cooperated with Zionists, non-Zionists, Reform, atheists, labor or capitalists, Democrats or Republicans—anyone willing to help. Nor was this policy simply the pragmatic but unintentional result of a great deal of relief activity. Rather, it was the result of a clear-cut policy, reinforced by a *psak* or religious ruling by Rabbi Aaron Kotler, the preeminent Torah authority in the United States and guiding spirit of Vaad Hatzalah and Agudath Israel.

Several incidents among hundreds will highlight this Orthodox policy of cooperation. The first involved a cable sent by Yitzchok Sternbuch (the representative of the Orthodox in Switzerland) on September 3, 1942 to Jacob Rosenheim, president of World Agudath Israel, several days after the well-known message from Gerhart Riegner to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise on August 28.

Sternbuch's cable, based on the same "reliable" source as the "intercepted" Lichtheim report of August 15, detailed *in unequivocal terms* the gruesome murder of 100,000 Jews in Warsaw, including the story of the "human" soap and fertilizer. Since the Orthodox made use of the secret Polish diplomatic code, the Sternbuch message was not intercepted by the State Department and it reached Rosenheim on September 3. After citing the horrible facts, Sternbuch pleaded in his cable:

> It must be supposed that only energetic reprisals on the part of America could halt these persecutions. Do whatever you can to arouse an American reaction to halt these persecutions. Do whatever you can to produce such a reaction, stirring up statesmen, the press, and the community. *Inform Wise, [Abba Hillel] Silver, Lubawiczer [Rebbe], Einstein, [Jacob] Klatskin, [Nahum] Goldmann, Thomas Mann,* and others (emphasis added).

Rosenheim immediately called Rabbi Abraham Kalmanowitz of Vaad Hatzalah, and the next day, September 4, Rabbi Wise received the cable. Only as a result of badgering by the Orthodox to do something did Rabbi Wise finally call the very first meeting of leaders of the major Jewish organizations.

Following this meeting, and influenced at least in part by it and by the public revelations in November 1942 of the Riegner and Sternbuch cables, there occurred the only attempt by American Jewish organizations to form a united front. This was the ill-fated Emergency Committee for European Jewish Affairs, comprised of thirty-two organizations including the Orthodox. In no way does this conform to the notion of the Orthodox "keeping at a distance." . . .

In view of the constant failure of the Roosevelt administration to take any concrete action to prevent the complete annihilation of the Jewish people, the Orthodox cooperated with the much vilified Peter Bergson group of Revisionist Zionists, to protest publicly. Against all advice, over 400 bearded, black-garbed rabbis marched in Washington, D.C., to the White House on October 6, 1943, a few days before Yom Kippur. The President conveniently absented himself that day and the dignified but aggrieved spiritual leaders of Orthodox Jewry were met by Vice President Henry Wallace.

On the other hand, the Orthodox did "go it alone," at times even battling the entire Jewish establishment, and for good reason. This was the result of the unique attitude of the Orthodox, based on the high priority the *Halakhah* places on *pikuah nefesh,* the saving of human lives. They placed the relief and rescue of the remnants of their people above a strictly legalistic adherence to national laws and regulations. In contrast, the super-patriotic stance of the leaders of the American Jewish establishment did not permit them to violate either the letter or spirit of the Trading with the Enemy Act, and other wartime regulations, which forbade the transfer of money and food or any communication with enemy-occupied territory.

It was this Orthodox policy which helped to pierce the "curtain of silence" about the horrible news emanating from Nazi-occupied countries. This news, as Mr. Laqueur notes, came readily into neutral countries, especially Switzerland and Turkey. Among the primary sources of direct information about the . . . Nazi program of genocide was Michael-Ber Weissmandl. This incredible, "ultra-Orthodox" Slovakian rabbi simultaneously headed the last existing yeshivah under the Nazi heel and was the leader and inspiring force behind the Slovakian Jewish underground. He was responsible, among other things, for inspiring several "ransom" schemes with the Nazis, for the publication via Switzerland of the Auschwitz Protocol, and for the proposal to bomb Auschwitz and its rail lines. His hundreds of messages were sent to *all Jewish factions* in order to provide the widest possible publicity. . . .

Perhaps the Orthodox perspective is best expressed in the words of Rabbi Kotler, that great talmudic sage and leader of rescue, when this very issue of cooperation was raised. Asked why he worked with Stephen Wise, who after all was a Reform rabbi, he responded, "I would prostrate myself before the Pope if it would save the nail on the finger of a Jewish child."

DAVID KRANZLER
Queensborough Community College
Bayside, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Jewish Denial & the Holocaust," Walter Laqueur states that the lack of comprehension of Hitler's policy of extermination was due to the geographic distance from the scene of destruction on the part of the then leading communal figures, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise and Nahum Goldmann. While Richard Lichtheim's ability to perceive and accept the reality of Hitler's Final Solution from Geneva, Switzerland, supports Mr. Laqueur's thesis, a reading of Rabbi Wise's autobiography, *Challenging Years,* and his letters, *Servant of the People,* makes it clear that Rabbi Wise understood the threat and took it seriously.

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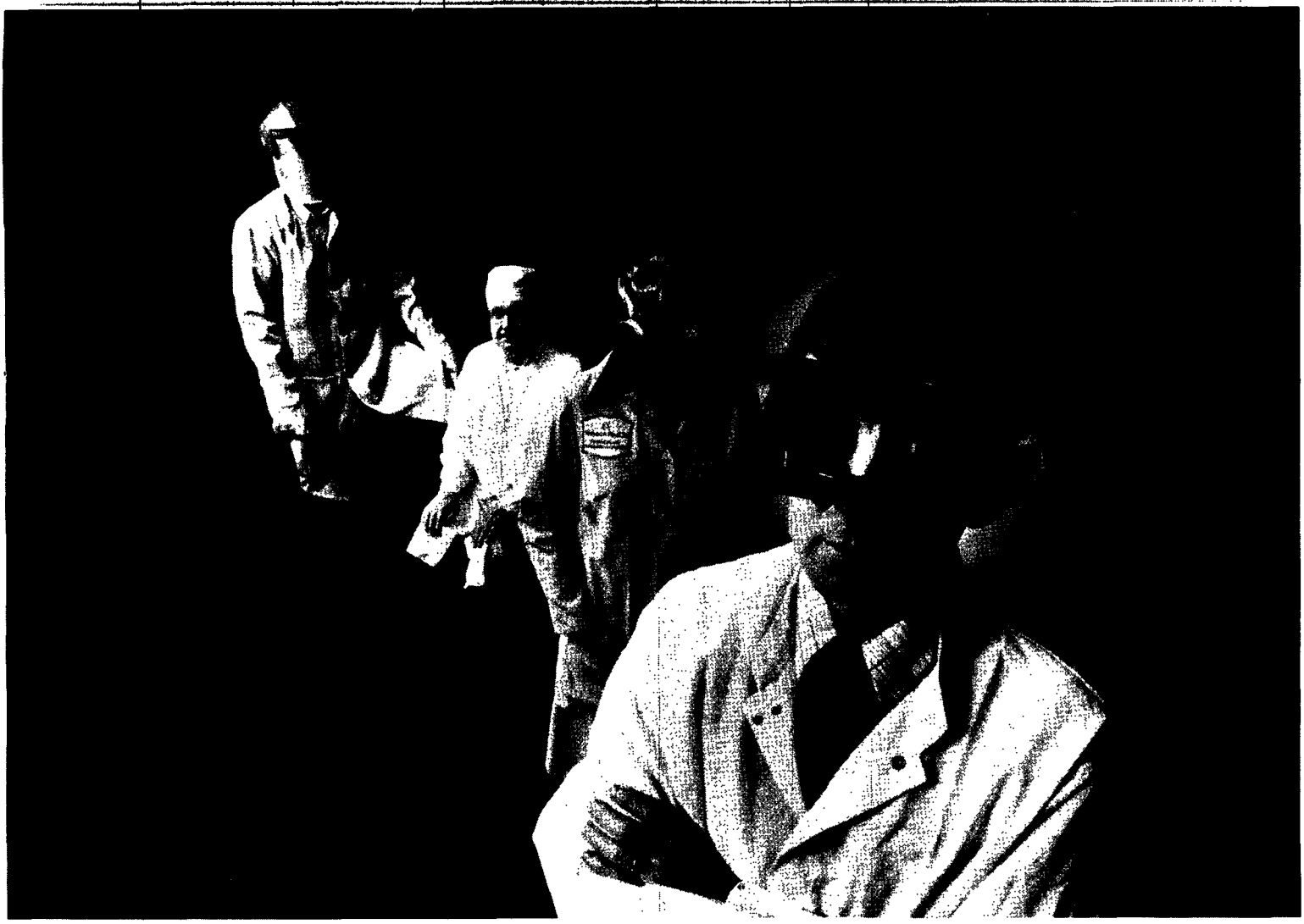

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At the time he attributed some of the sluggish response to the leadership of the American Jewish Committee.

Yet if distance from the scene of the crime was a factor which contributed to the sluggishness of response, it was a minor one compared to some others which come to mind. First of all, there was the image of Germany as a country devoted to and dominated by *Kultur*, the country of *Dichter und Denker*, of Schiller and Goethe, where violence and genocide would never be practiced. Germany, therefore, was held in high esteem by Jews both inside the country and out. Secondly, one must adduce the effects of the Depression. While the strong correlation between worsening economic conditions and the rise of the Nazis is well known, in this context attention must be given to the successively stringent immigration restrictions which were imposed by virtually all countries which might have offered a haven to the Jews. If, as in the United States, affidavits of support were required for admission, many potential sponsors did not have sufficient means or were afraid that in the light of the high level of unemployment, the refugees would become too heavy a burden upon their sponsors. . . .

Thirdly, since all through the 19th century the onset of hard times had always been accompanied by a rise in anti-Jewish feelings, there was reason to hope that with the passing of the Depression the hostility would recede. It was, therefore, extremely difficult to distinguish between old-fashioned *"risches"* and modern anti-Semitism.The former concept describes traditional anti-Jewish sentiment while the latter is a recent social movement which holds that the world would be a better place if the Jews were eliminated from it.

Finally, for a correct evaluation of the aims of a social movement, geographic distance may be less important than social distance, in this case a distance between generations. We know that in times of rapid social change or revolution a so-called generation splinters into ever smaller age cohorts with the result that common understandings between generations become ever more difficult. Therefore, the discrepancy in age between the Jewish leaders and the Nazi leadership was a further handicap in understanding the deadliness of the Nazi movement. With one exception, all the personalities mentioned by Mr. Laqueur were forty-five years and older in 1940, Wise and Weizmann being sixty-five years of age. The one exception was Gerhart Riegner, the representative of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva, who was twenty-nine years old in 1940. It may have been fortuitous that it fell to Mr. Riegner to receive and transmit the first reports of the mass killings. However, this "young and able director of our Geneva office" (Wise) was born in 1911 and was fully attuned to the impulses of his age cohort. He knew "instinctively" that the threat to render Europe *Judenrein* was not an empty gesture.

ERICH ROSENTHAL
Great Neck, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Walter Laqueur's shocking article brings to my mind an episode which I believe dates to 1942. I was then working for Ernst Kris, at the New School for Social Research, on a project on Nazi propaganda. Kris had been a consultant to the BBC, which played an important role in the English psychological war effort. Kris told us that he had participated in a meeting at which all the leading propaganda experts of the BBC and of the American Office of War Information were present, and the question was: shall the facts of the Final Solution, of which the BBC had become aware, be broadcast? According to Kris, the suggestion was rejected unanimously for the following reasons: although the facts might be well documented, people were not likely to believe them. The BBC had a record of veracity to lose, and could not risk testing a reputation which it had worked hard over many years to establish. Moreover, the legacy of World War I had made people propaganda conscious: since the atrocity stories of that war turned out to be untrue, the public would not believe such stories now, even if they were true. . . .

HENRY PACHTER
New York City

WALTER LAQUEUR writes:

I am grateful to those who commented on my article.

If I said that the Orthodox kept their distance from the rest, I meant what David Kranzler calls "go[ing] it alone," which was perhaps even more marked with regard to the initiatives which came from Jerusalem. This did not, of course, preclude an exchange of information, such as the cable from Sternbuch to Rosenheim, which Mr. Kranzler mentions.

I did not wish to imply that geographical distance was the only, or even the main, reason for failing to understand the enormity of the events; if such an impression was created, I would like to correct it. Erich Rosenthal maintains, among other things, that the reluctance to believe the news from Eastern Europe had more to do with the age of the Jewish leadership—younger people being more willing to accept the facts than older ones. There may be a grain of truth in this assumption, but I for one found very little evidence for it. The younger generation of Jews in Germany, Austria, and the other communities of Central and Western Europe was, on the whole, as reluctant to believe the news about the Final Solution as its elders, and the same is true, *grosso modo*, for East European Jewry. The explanation for this reluctance is, I believe, more complicated; the situation varied from country to country and indeed from individual to individual; I could not deal with all the aspects of this problem in the framework of an article.

My friend Henry Pachter's memory (based on an account by Ernst Kris) does not betray him. The BBC was guided by the instructions of the Foreign Office and the Political Warfare Executive. Many of these files are now accessible and they bear out Mr. Pachter's story. A planning committee of the British Ministry of Information (MOI) reached the conclusion in July 1941 that though a certain amount of horror was needed in British propaganda, it was to be used sparingly "and must always deal with the treatment of indisputably innocent people. Not with violent political opponents. And not with Jews." The reason, very briefly, was that, according to the experts of MOI, the public thought that people singled out as victims were probably a bad lot. Thus MOI paradoxically referred to the "Holocaust of Catholics" in Europe but not to the Jews. There was a further reason. A senior official of MOI wrote that for twenty years between the two world wars there had been a well-conducted campaign against atrocity stories and some people had be-

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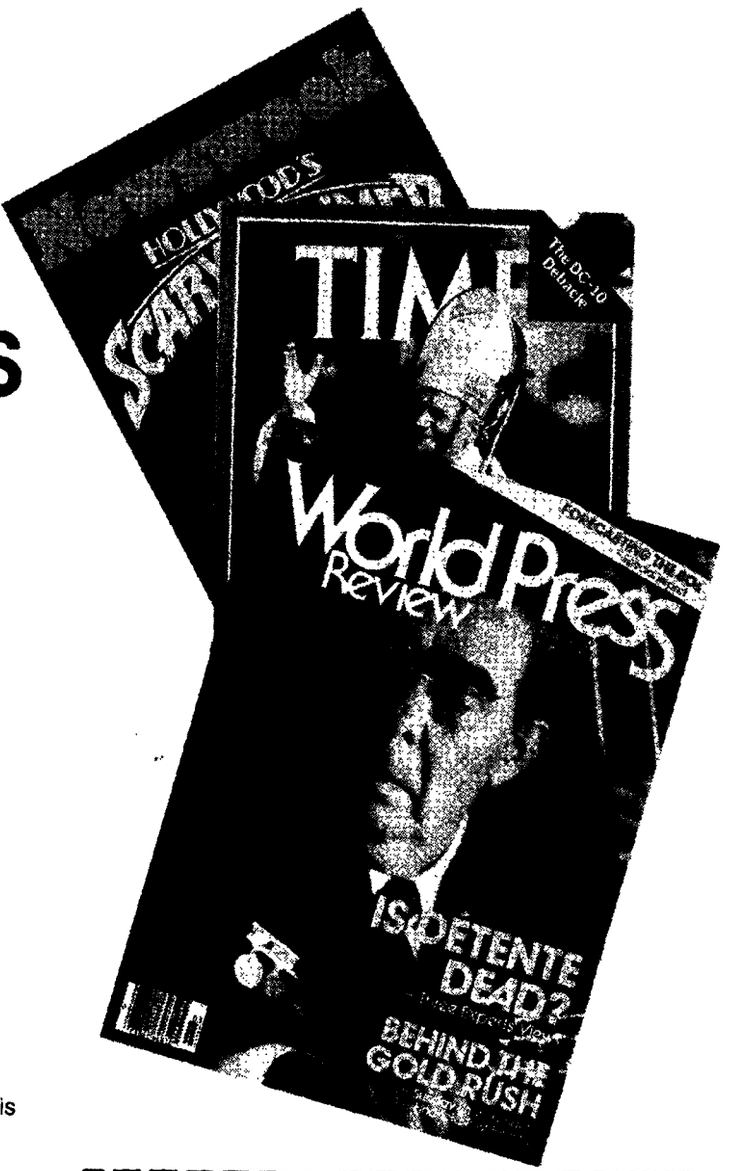

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come "contra-suggestible." He personally did not know whether there was a "corpse factory" or not, but most people believed there was not (R. Frazer, in Ian McLaine, *Ministry of Morale*, London, 1979). The attitude of the American Office of War Information was by no means different. It can be shown, I believe, that OWI continued to play down the "Jewish theme" in its broadcasts long after the BBC had begun to comment on the news from Eastern Europe, albeit reluctantly and sporadically. The policy of the Allied propaganda machines in 1942-44 in this respect remains to be examined in greater detail.

Moscow to New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I try to follow what ex-Soviet Jews write about their new life, especially fiction, in different periodicals in the United States, France, and Israel. Tova Reich, in her story, "Moscow Night in New York" [December 1979], is a hundred times better, stronger, more intelligent, and provocative than almost any of those "Russians."

SIMON MARKISH

Geneva, Switzerland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In Tova Reich's story, "Moscow Night in New York," the emigrés of Moscow exchange New York news about "engineers, scientists, professors—not one of whom had been able to find work in his own field, all of them embittered and depressed, griping and scribbling away, trying to make ends meet through tiresome lectures, books, and articles about their confrontation with Soviet officials." Although the author of a story is of course perfectly entitled to have his characters say whatever he wishes, it might be worth pointing out that as a representation of actuality, this statement about the occupational and employment situation of Russian emigrés is not correct.

The two previous waves of emigrés from Soviet Russia (1918-49) constitute today the highest-income group in the United States. According to the already available evidence, the latest emigration will even surpass its predecessors. Practically all former Soviet engineers are employed here as engineers after they acquire some working knowledge of English, except those who have gone into (more lucrative) business and trade (a former Soviet engineer I know makes $70,000 a year in the optics trade, while another has launched his second thriving live fish store). As for scientists, their professional English was usually good enough even in Russia, and the best of them were known here from their papers even before they emigrated.

Many Soviet fields of science and engineering are highly advanced. This is sad (in terms of the global strategic situation) but it is a fact. American free enterprise will not employ an American scientist or engineer if it can employ for the same pay a more gifted and/or experienced former Soviet scientist or engineer, especially if he also worked in a field that was moving ahead of its American counterpart! The president of a prestigious firm has told me that he employs several former Soviet engineers and wants more because they are better than today's run-of-the-mill American engineering graduates (who are also very few in number).

American universities—more inert than free enterprise in the recognition of talent—have nevertheless whole clusters of former Soviet scientists. A Moscow friend of mine who came here last year is a professor of mathematics at Columbia—he and his wife, a doctor, are on the way to a six-figure income.

Conversely, "lectures, books, and articles" on subjects like Russia (or any foreign country) are as difficult for an emigré from Russia (or anyone else!) to sell (unless he is the day's newspaper sensation) as it is easy for him to make money in engineering, science, or any commercial field. Another friend of mine—a born American who came to Russia as a youth, was arrested, spent sixteen years in the worst Soviet camps yet described, and was then repatriated to the United States—has readily found a high-paid job as a commercial artist. But he had to publish *at his own expense* his book of memoirs, quite unique, with his sketches from memory; his tragedy is that no commercial publisher or book distributor wants even to look at *any* "Russian book" unless the author is today's "man in the news."

To this extent, at least, the situation of real emigrés from the real Moscow in the real New York differs considerably from Tova Reich's characters' estimate of it.

LEV NAVROZOV

Riverdale, New York

TOVA REICH writes:

Judging by the canons of socialist realism, Lev Navrozov is of course right: numerous Soviet emigrés have made it in this country, continue to make it, and, I hope, will do even better in the future. Admittedly, a more positive and enthusiastic picture of health and success—of happy engineers and humming fishmongers making money hand over fist in this capitalist paradise—could have been presented in my story, resulting, no doubt, in a better, more socially useful and sanguine image of the fate of the Soviet emigré in America.

For myself, though, I prefer other canons of judgment. I'm a writer of fiction. Nothing I've written, including my novel *Mara*, could be praised for promoting socially useful images. And yet I think they are true images, both artistically and, in important ways, realistically. While it might serve the needs—or at least preferences—of some Soviet emigrés to be presented as part of an upwardly mobile social group, such a presentation would not, I suspect, satisfy all of them. And besides, I write what I know, and what I know—which no doubt represents a more limited sample of emigré humanity than Mr. Navrozov's—is in fact faithfully represented in my story.

Ever since his American debut in COMMENTARY, I've admired Lev Navrozov's writing, and my own sense of the new Soviet emigration has been enriched by it. In a way, his accomplishment reminds me of the successes he cites, at least in one respect. Coming to this country as a writer, not a dissident, he has remained a writer, and, like Nabokov, has crafted a unique style from the materials of a foreign tongue. I thank him for that, and beg his forgiveness on a difference of view that I suspect is not as great as it seems.

Cults

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his review of *Moonstruck: A Memoir of My Life in a Cult* by Allen Tate Wood [Books in Review, December 1979], Robert Richman describes the author as holding "the second highest rank in Moon's U.S. organization," controlling the "Church's political unit, the Freedom Leadership Foundation." As the current head of the Freedom Leadership Foun-

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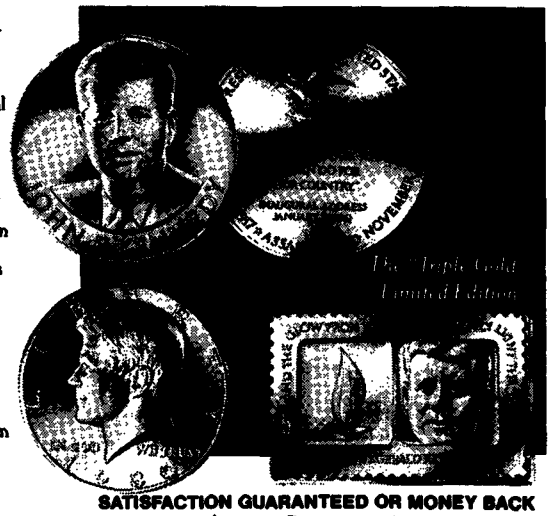

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dation, Mr. Wood's successor of sorts, I would like to challenge the usefulness of Mr. Richman's review.

It is, for one thing, full of factual errors, some simply repeating Mr. Wood's accusations and others of his own making. Surely a reviewer should be required to maintain a critical attitude not only toward the author of a book under review, but also toward the subject matter and factual basis of the book.

For example, Mr. Richman repeats and seems to accept at face value the allegation that the Freedom Leadership Foundation is the "political arm of the Unification Church" engaged in lobbying and the like. The allegation ignores the findings of the IRS which, after two years of intensive investigation of the Freedom Leadership Foundation, renewed its tax-exempt, non-profit status. . . .

It is not my intention here, however, to dispute the allegations presented by Mr. Wood. Enough material has been generated by the Unification Church in its own defense and is easily available to anyone who cares to check. Rather, I wish to defend my own reputation and the good character of my friends and colleagues in the Unification Church which Mr. Richman in his review so lightly treads upon. My complaint is this: what seems to be the issue in question—whether we, the members of the Unification Church, are as weak and foolish as Wood alleges—is assumed by Mr. Richman, rather than argued.

Mr. Richman's premises are very clear. He criticizes Wood for failing to "investigate the impulses and motivation that make the pathology he describes so widespread among his generation." Further, Mr. Richman chronicles Wood's personal and literary shortcomings: "absence of inquiry," "purposeless misbehavior," escapism, and "self-destructive tendencies." Rather than calling into question the moral and philosophical judgments Wood makes in his book, these failings, says Mr. Richman, "made Wood the perfect inductee into Moon's cult."

But not all "Moonies" are, as Mr. Richman says Wood was, drugged-out drop-outs in search of bliss and a place to lay their heads. I have been a member of the Unification Church for eight years, since I was seventeen. . . . At the time I joined I was attending George Washington University on a full debate scholarship. I had been at the top of my class and a national championship debator. I did, however, display one of the symptoms termed pathological by Mr. Richman, "spiritual hunger," which I would have at that time called "intellectual curiosity" since I wasn't really religiously inclined. And, of course, I was still "idealistic." But the only despair I experienced was an occasional qualm that I was fated to end up as so many of my colleagues and acquaintances from the world of debate—a graduate of Yale or Harvard Law School. Intellect without soul! Ego without grace! I assured myself, however, that there were worse fates.

My recruitment into the church was insidiously simple. I was asked if I wanted to hear a good idea. . . . I found the "idea" logically consistent, comprehensive, philosophically and theologically profound, reasonable, moral, applicable, and alive. I admit I was also attracted by the sense of shared commitment and community, which is an element of the Unification Church member's way of life; but frankly it was a secondary consideration. I studied the "idea" for six months before joining. And although I have ever since retained a critical attitude toward both the beliefs and practices of my church, not even three years at Brown University (where, on my own, paid for by me, I finished my education, lived two years in a college dormitory, and achieved a 3.9 grade-point average) could shake my faith. Certainly no one accused me of "purposeless misbehavior" there.

Nor do I consider myself unique. Indeed, among the things which led me to join the Unification Church was the superior company I found in it: people of rounded characters, open minds, rationality, and moral sensibilities. Many of them are now at Harvard, Yale, or Chicago Divinity Schools, or pursuing careers in journalism, education, or the arts. All of them shared similar trials, made similar sacrifices, and traveled the same road of doubt and discovery. Our movement is still young, and I cannot point to any grand accomplishments by its members (although one of them recently conducted the Bolshoi ballet). To our doubters and critics, therefore, I can only say: wait ten years.

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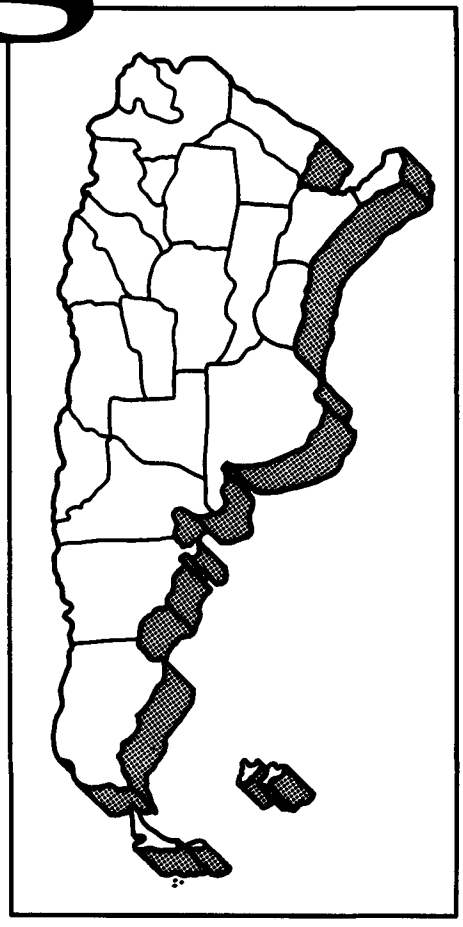
The New Argentina.



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Prominent guests like David Rockefeller, chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank; Michael Wilson, Canada's minister of foreign commerce, and Jack Spitzer, president of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

And it's easy to see why.

Look at the great natural beauty of Argentina, ranging from the snow-capped Andes to the rich farming land of the Pampa. Frankly, it's a country of almost unlimited agricultural, mineral and forest resources.

And the streets of Buenos Aires, its capital of more than 8 million people, and other Argentine cities are peaceful and safe once again for citizens and tourists. The dark night of domestic unrest and chaos is over.

William D. Rogers, the former U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, contrasting his visit to Argentina in 1979 with one in 1975, said: "Nowadays, we live in another atmosphere."

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Argentina has always been a cultural center of the Americas, and once again, the famous Colon Theatre is the busy hub around which the musical and dramatic life of Buenos Aires revolves.

Leading musical ensembles like the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Aldo Cecato, the New York Philharmonic led by Zubin Mehta, and the Zurich Orchestra as well as famous stars like the internationally-acclaimed Italian tenor, Luciano Pavarotti, are featured. This year, Buenos Aires will celebrate its 400th anniversary with a year-long festival of the world's greatest music and musicians.

Argentina's economic future is equally bright. Net reserves in foreign exchange are $10 billion—compared with only $20 million in 1976. The balance of payments surplus for each of the last two years has been $2 billion.

Argentina's economic infrastructure continues to be expanded and strengthened. It is the leading Latin American country in nuclear development with a plant at Atucha completed and another at Embalse under construction. Four more electric-nuclear plants will be built by the year 2000. The billion-dollar Salto Grande hydro-electric dam between Argentina and Uruguay is already working.

The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have approved loans of $420 million to help finance the $3.8 billion Yacyreta hydro-electric project on the Parana River along the Argentine-Paraguay border.

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As former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury William Simon said of Argentina following his recent trip: "In the past three years, it has seen more light than the previous thirty. And that is something seldom known in history."

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Mr. Richman bemoans the circumstances that led a person like Allen Wood, a descendant of such "adventuresome" and "rigorous" forebears as writer Allen Tate and explorer Meriwether Lewis, to join the Unification Church. I cannot say for certain, but I suspect it was the spark of that spirit still alive in Mr. Wood that led him to join at all. I find my own life in the church, at least, one of constant challenge, intellectual and spiritual adventure, and purposive action....

GERARD WILLIS
Secretary General
Freedom Leadership Foundation
Washington, D.C.

ROBERT RICHMAN writes:

Not being privy to the inner workings of the Unification Church, I could only attempt to report Allen Tate Wood's "accusations" neutrally. My job consisted, in part, in gleaning Wood's attitude from the details he gives (family life, schooling, etc.), and in determining how his attitude may have been responsible for certain decisions he made. I consistently found feebleness of will, a lack of resilience, and a poor quality in judgment. I felt perfectly justified, therefore, in saying that Wood's decision to join Moon was insecure and weakly felt. Furthermore, this evidence of insecurity and confusion throughout Wood's life led me to the not far-fetched conclusion that the Unification Church quite possibly is a haven for such numb sensibilities (whose numbers ballooned in the 60's and 70's, as did the numbers in Moon's church).

I fear that Gerard Willis's personal history has little bearing on my review. I congratulate him on his fine academic record and the large sacrifices he seems to have made. But with success comes responsibility. To abandon one's will and forgo responsibility in favor of a brutal and sadistic man like the Reverend Moon doesn't seem to me to be the answer. There is something desperate about the easy solution Moon offers and Mr. Willis promotes—precisely the same desperation, in fact, that separates "spiritual hunger" from intellectual curiosity and idealism. It is this crucial distinction that Mr. Willis tellingly refuses to perceive.

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Women Rabbis

To the Editor of Commentary:

In her article, "Women as Conservative Rabbis?" [October 1979], Ruth R. Wisse is responding to three different but related issues: the quality of the report of the Commission on the Ordination of Women as Rabbis; the actual question of women's ordination; and a far broader issue, the internal vitality and creative potentiality of contemporary Jewish life.

Mrs. Wisse raises a number of points regarding the report itself.

Feminism: she claims that the report treats feminism and the feminist movement with the "delicacy of a wooing lover." That my perusal of the report did not lead to a similar conclusion may be more symptomatic of different interpretations of the nature of wooing than of contrary positions on the ordination issue. The report does fail, as Mrs. Wisse maintains, to deal with substantive questions regarding the implications of the feminist critique for Jewish tradition. There are, she accurately observes, aspects of feminism which, if carried to their most radical conclusion, are as "compatible with traditional Judaism as Delilah was with Samson." But was the commission's report the proper place to confront these questions? They were not part of its mandate, and a general debate over the feminist movement—which like Judaism is not a monolith—would deflect attention from basic *halakhic* considerations. Mrs. Wisse's hostility toward feminism may be a product of the fact that the relationship of many feminists to Judaism and Jewish tradition has been, at the least, problematic. Some of the more hostile attacks on Jewish life have come from feminist sectors. Certainly this too needs to be confronted, but not in the commission's report.

The contemporary rabbinic role: Mrs. Wisse is distressed, and properly so, by the image of the rabbi portrayed in the report. The American rabbi does all too often "court his parishioners like an auditioning actor" and plays but a "custodial role" in the community. Mrs. Wisse accuses the commission of embracing this status quo instead of trying to return the rabbinate to its bygone grandeur. But the commission's mandate was to study the "role of women" as rabbis and not the role of the rabbi. In light of the sorry stature of the American rabbi, one wonders why so many gifted women are anxious to join rabbinical ranks. Could it be that they believe they can rectify this state by refusing to embrace a status quo which diminishes the previous fruits of their long-fought battle?

Rabbis as witnesses: Mrs. Wisse correctly observes that the commission dismissed the thorny *halakhic* obstacle to ordination— the question of *edut* (witnessing)—with the air of an afterthought. Proponents and opponents of the report believe, depending on their views, that it either wisely avoided or cowardly sidestepped the question of rabbinic duties. Among the proponents there are some, e.g. Seymour Siegel and Judith Hauptman, who seem ready to grapple with it. Regrettably the commission was unwilling to do so, thus weakening the report's impact.

Mrs. Wisse's critique cannot be easily dismissed. She isolates legitimate shortcomings in the report. But do they constitute sufficient grounds to reject ordination? Prior to *musaf* on Yom Kippur, the cantor intones the *Hinneni*, imploring the Almighty not to reject the congregation's petitions because of his failure to vocalize them properly. Understandably anxious to maintain *shalom bayit* within Conservative ranks, the commission failed properly to vocalize the entire issue. Is the cause to be rejected because of some shortcoming of *this* brief?

Ultimately Mrs. Wisse's main agenda is not the question of ordination but the nature of contemporary Jewish societal and sexual patterns. She notes that Judaism's ability to create alternative models of virility rooted in intellectual, not physical, prowess, helped to compensate for Jewish dependency on the non-Jewish world and prevented the evolution of an emotionally and spiritually castrated male figure. While there were once legitimate grounds for this particular sexual differentiation, what is the contemporary justification for the preservation of this historical anachronism? If it was for the "noble and potentially sublime purpose of perfecting Jews and humankind," then Mrs. Wisse's focus should not only be the desire of women to serve as rabbis but their inclination to fill a myriad of other "non-traditional" roles, from prime minister to professor.

Deborah E. Lipstadt
University of California
Los Angeles, California

Ruth R. Wisse writes:

Deborah E. Lipstadt concurs with my major criticisms of the Conservative movement's report favoring the ordination of women as rabbis, but she does not think the failings of the report should prejudice the issue. "Is the cause to be rejected because of some shortcoming of *this* brief?"

But *this* brief is no less than the position paper of the Conservative movement on the issue in question. Unless the introduction of women rabbis is to be taken as a new article of faith, the report's weakness in making its own case certainly does raise serious doubts about the advisability and wisdom of the proposed change.

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Soviet Global Strategy

Richard Pipes

In his State of the Union address earlier this year, President Carter at one point addressed himself to the Soviet leadership:

> The Soviet Union must answer some basic questions: Will it help promote a stable international environment in which its own legitimate, peaceful concerns can be pursued? Or will it continue to expand its military power far beyond its legitimate security needs, using that power for colonial conquests?

That the President could seriously raise such questions, with the record of over six decades of Soviet history at his disposal, suggests that while he may have learned by now that the Soviet leaders prevaricate he has yet to find out who they are and what they want.

A few evenings spent with a standard manual of Marxism-Leninism and a good history of the Communist party of the Soviet Union would help the President answer his questions and save him (and the rest of us) from some more costly mistakes. What he would quickly learn—for he is said to be an apt pupil—is that: (1) in the Soviet case, "legitimate" concerns are not synonymous with "peaceful" concerns or "defense"; (2) the Soviet leadership is unable, for sound ideological, political, and economic reasons, to "promote a stable international environment"; (3) its "legitimate security needs" do require "colonial conquests."

These facts are what they are, not because the Soviet leaders will them so but because they themselves are the victims of a system which they lack the power to alter—except at the risk of bringing the whole structure down. The sooner those in charge of our foreign policy abandon their unbearable moralizing and come to grips with the imperatives of the regime which fate has chosen to be our adversary, the better for all concerned.

Here, then, are some rudimentary answers to the questions posed by the President.

To begin with the ideological factors behind Soviet foreign policy: Marxism-Leninism is by its very nature a militant doctrine, the child of the age of Social Darwinism, which views history as the record of uninterrupted class warfare and which advocates the continuation of class war as a means of abolishing, once and for all, classes and the exploitation of man by man. The kind of "stability" of which the President speaks and which he implies to be the desirable objective of all foreign policy can be attained, according to this doctrine, only *after* capitalism has been liquidated. The liquidation of capitalism, however, calls for a long period of instability, including international wars, which, according to Lenin, are an inevitable concomitant of capitalism.

Secondly, Marxism-Leninism is an international doctrine. As it perceives them, the phases in the evolution of mankind are global in scope and cannot be contained (except transitionally) within the limits of the nation-state or served by its "legitimate security needs." The fundamental international, or, rather, supranational, character of the doctrine is symbolized by Communism's permanent slogan since 1847, "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" In 1917, the Bolsheviks (and this held true of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as well) were not fighting for a change of regime in Russia, but for a world-wide revolution. It deserves note that one of the earliest declarations of the Petrograd Soviet (then still firmly in the control of "moderate" socialists), issued in March 1917, was addressed to the "Peoples of the Entire World" and called on them to rid themselves of their "ruling classes." This attitude was never repudiated by Lenin; nor has it ever been repudiated by his successors.

Now it is possible to minimize such ideological considerations with the argument that history is replete with instances of movements which, having laid claim to universality, nevertheless adjusted themselves to more modest roles: several religions, including Islam, provide good examples. But apart from the fact that accommodations of this nature have always occurred as the result of a universalist movement running into resistance that it could not overcome, Communism is not only a faith, it is also the program of a powerful secular government. It is precisely this fusion of a universalist historical doctrine with the most mundane

Richard Pipes is Frank B. Baird, Jr. Professor of History at Harvard and the author of, among other works, *Russia Under the Old Regime* and a recently completed two-volume biography of Peter Struve. His widely discussed article, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight & Win a Nuclear War," appeared in our July 1977 issue.

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aspirations of a great imperialist power that lends Communist Russia's global ambitions such force. For behind the lofty ideals of a classless society loom also the very vulgar interests of a ruling elite which finds in them a rationale for power and privilege.

The most painful reality that the Soviet leadership confronts every day of its existence is that it has no generally acknowledged mandate to rule. It lacks the legitimacy of ancient tradition; nor can it derive its authority from the personal charisma of a great living leader. This committee of colorless, self-perpetuating civil servants pretends to rest on a popular mandate and to this end every now and then stages mock elections, but the ritual of choosing without having a choice surely deceives only simpletons. Such mandate as the Bolshevik regime can reasonably lay claim to derives entirely from history, namely, from the assertion that it represents the vanguard of the majestic force of progress whose mission it is to accomplish the final social revolution in human history. Once this particular claim is given up—as it would be were the Soviet government to acknowledge the international status quo as permanent and accommodate itself within its present sphere of influence—the question of legitimacy would at once crop up. For indeed, who has given the Communist party of the Soviet Union the right to monopolize the country's political authority as well as its human and material resources?—none other than the goddess of history who has challenged it to the noblest mission ever assigned to man. The regime, therefore, must press onward and outward, it must win, or at least appear to win, incessant victories against "capitalism" so as to maintain the illusion of a relentless forward movement, commensurate with its mission. The alternative is to risk having its political credentials subjected to scrutiny and possible disqualification.

In addition to its universalist ideology and the ordinary political self-interest of the ruling elite, Soviet expansionism also has solid roots in Russian history. Because of the inherent poverty of Russia, due to adverse climate, soil, and other related factors, the country has never been able to support a population at a level of density common in more temperate zones. Throughout their history, Russians have colonized areas adjacent to their homeland in the northern taiga, sometimes peacefully, sometimes by conquest. Of all European countries, Russia has not only the oldest and most persistent tradition of imperial expansion, but also the record of greatest tenacity in holding on to conquered areas.

Thus, ideology, political survival, and economic exigencies reinforce one another, impelling Russia toward conquest. Each new territory acquired becomes part of the national "patrimony" and is, sooner or later, incorporated into the homeland. Each demands a "buffer" to protect it from real or imaginary enemies, until it, too, becomes part of the homeland, and, in turn, requires its own buffer.

THE theory of détente, promoted by the Soviet regime since the mid-1950's, would seem to contradict the thesis that expansionism and international class war are indispensable to Russian Communism. As presented to the West (the matter is handled quite differently within the country), the theory, calling for peaceful coexistence between diverse social systems, seems to accept the prospect of a nonviolent evolution and a common, "convergent" end-product. In reality, détente is merely a tactical adaptation of a general strategy, which does not run contrary to the principles enunciated above. To explain why this is the case, one must say a few words about the essential characteristic of Communist politics as formulated by Lenin and elaborated upon by his epigones.

Lenin's historic achievement is to have militarized politics. It has been aptly said that Lenin stood Clausewitz on his head by making politics the pursuit of war by other means: war is the aim, politics a means, rather than the other way around. This being the case, the application of political strategy and tactics is determined by an essentially military assessment of what is known as the "correlation of forces." The latter, in Communist theory, embraces not only those factors which in Western terminology are included in the concept of "balance of power" but also economic capabilities, social stability, and public opinion, i.e., elements that, although not military in the strict sense of the word, nevertheless have considerable bearing on a nation's ability to wage war.

From this point of view, the decision whether to press one's offensive against the "class enemy," internal as well as external, or to hold back, must be based on a cool appraisal of the contending forces. In a speech delivered in May 1918, in which he reiterated that "final victory is possible only on a world scale," Lenin admonished his followers not to rush headlong into battle under all circumstances:

> We possess great revolutionary experience, which has taught us that it is essential to employ the tactics of merciless attack when objective conditions permit. . . . But we have to resort *to temporizing tactics, to a slow gathering of forces* when objective circumstances do not favor a call for a general merciless repulse.*

In the eyes of the Soviet leadership, the phenomena which in the West are labeled "cold war" and "détente" and perceived as antithetical are merely tactical nuances of one and the same strategy, alternately applied, depending on "objective circumstances." In the case of the détente policy launched in the mid-1950's, the decisive objective

* V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, (London, n.d.), XXVII, pp. 373, 377; emphasis added.

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circumstance was the enemy's complete nuclear superiority which placed him in a position to destroy much of the Soviet Union at will. This particular circumstance did not in the least obviate the necessity of waging international class war, but it did call for the adaptation of one's battle plans: confrontation had to be avoided and indirect methods of combat given preference—at any rate, until such time as America's nuclear threat could be safely neutralized.

The end objective of Soviet global policy is, of course, a world from which private property in the means of production has been banished and the constituent states are, with minor variations, copies of the Soviet state. It is only in a world so fashioned that the elite ruling Soviet Russia would feel secure and comfortable.

This objective does not, as is sometimes thought, require that the USSR physically occupy the entire world, a task which is beyond even the capabilities of its large military and security forces. The term "hegemony" conveys very accurately the kind of international arrangement with which the Soviet leadership would be satisfied. The concept is of Greek origin and was originally coined to describe the dominance enjoyed by one or another city state, and especially the Macedonian kingdom, over Hellas. Possession of "hegemony" did not then and does not now entail physical conquest: rather, it signifies the ability of the hegemonial power to assert its interests within the area over which it claims hegemony by the threat of coercion, or, if that fails to produce the desired effect, by its actual application. Britain enjoyed hegemony over a good part of the globe in the 19th century; the United States had it between the end of World War II and its withdrawal from Vietnam. Germany launched two world wars in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain European hegemony. Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated concisely the ultimate aspiration of Soviet policy in a speech to the 24th Congress of the CPSU in 1971 when he boasted, somewhat prematurely: "Today, there is no question of any significance which can be decided without the Soviet Union *or in opposition to it.*"* Implied in this statement is the rejection of the notion that Soviet interests are anything less than global in scope and can be confined within the boundaries of a national state or even a bloc of states. It goes without saying that the assertion of a similar claim by the United States would be rejected out of hand by the Soviet Union (as well as by American liberals) as a manifestation of the crassest imperialism. This is but one of many examples of the Soviet Union laying down the rules of international politics in a manner that entirely favors its own side.

If politics is warfare, then it requires strategic guidance. The strategy that one employs in the pursuit of global objectives cannot involve exclusively military weapons, but must embrace the entire spectrum of instrumentalities. Strategy of this type has been labeled "Grand" or "Total," and it suits a totalitarian country much better than it does a democratic one. The Soviet Union has indeed been organized by Lenin from the beginning for the waging of total war and it is to this end that the Soviet government has taken into its hands a monopoly of national powers and resources. There exists in the Soviet Union a mechanism of vertical and horizontal integration that not only enables but also compels the management of that giant political conglomerate to attempt a coordinated national and international policy. The proprietors of the Soviet Union have to seek to integrate politics, economics, and propaganda (ideology) to an extent inconceivable in the West where each of these realms is controlled by different groups and tends to pull in separate directions.

LET us cursorily survey the ingredients of Soviet Grand Strategy. Space precludes any discussion of the many aspects and nuances of Soviet *political* strategy. Its guiding principle, however, can be succinctly defined: it is to rely not so much on the forces at one's own disposal (i.e., foreign Communist parties and their "fronts") as on allies one is able provisionally and temporarily to detach from the enemy's camp on individual issues (e.g., nationalism, "peace," "racism," "anti-Zionism," etc.). This technique, originated by Russian opposition groups in the Czarist underground, has proved very successful when applied to international relations. Its essence can best be conveyed in the words of Lenin himself. In 1920 the Communist leader was faced with unrest over his cautious foreign policy from hotheads in the Third International. These people wanted a direct assault on the entire capitalist West. To them Lenin said bluntly:

> The entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is *full* of instances of changes of tack, conciliatory tactics, and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties!
>
> To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted, and complex than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states and to renounce in advance any change of tack, or any utilization of conflict of interest (even if temporary) among one's enemies, or any conciliation or compromise with possible allies (even if they are temporary, unstable, vacillating, or conditional allies), is that not ridiculous in the extreme? . . .
>
> After the first socialist revolution of the proletariat, and the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in some country, the proletariat of that country remains *for a long time weaker* than the

**XXIV S"ezd KPSS: Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1971), I, p. 482; emphasis added.

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> [international] bourgeoisie. . . . The more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive, skillful, and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest, rift between the enemies, any conflict of interests among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unreliable, and conditional.*

The success of this policy has been in large measure due to the fact that the "international bourgeoisie" not only refuses to acknowledge the manipulative intentions behind Soviet conciliatory policies but feels confident of its own ability to fish in the political waters of the Soviet Union by pitting nonexisting "doves" against equally spurious "hawks."

The Soviet *economic* arsenal is not rich enough to serve as a major weapon of Soviet global strategy. In its expansion, the USSR consequently relies much less on investments and trade as a means of spreading influence than was the case with the other great powers in the classical age of modern imperialism. Soviet economic leverage is exercised mainly through military and economic assistance carefully doled out to countries judged to be of strategic importance. Aid of this kind creates all kinds of dependencies, including the willingness of the recipient to host Communist administrative personnel. It is very instructive to analyze statistics of Soviet economic assistance to Third World countries because the figures give a good insight into the relative importance that Moscow attaches to them. On a per-capita basis, among the greatest beneficiaries of Soviet aid since 1954 have been South Yemen and Afghanistan. More recently, the USSR and its clients have poured vast sums of money into Turkey, a member of NATO, and Morocco. Significant increases in Soviet assistance are usually reliable indicators of Soviet strategic interests in a given area: judging by recent aid patterns, the Mediterranean enjoys very high priority in its mind.

In its relations with the advanced industrial powers, the Soviet Union is at a great disadvantage in attempting to exploit economic leverage, but even so it has had some success in making Western Europe and Japan dependent on its good will.

One form of leverage is the debts incurred in the West by the Soviet bloc during the period of détente. These are estimated today at $60 billion, one-quarter of it owed by the USSR, the remainder by the countries of Eastern Europe. The external indebtedness of the Soviet Union cannot be considered excessive, given that country's natural resources and gold reserves, but the same cannot be said of the "Peoples' Democracies" such as Poland, whose foreign obligations exceed those of its patron state. Western bankers have gladly lent vast sums to Eastern Europe on the assumption that any defaults would be made good by the Soviet Union. In so doing they have chosen to ignore official Soviet statements which repudiate any such obligation. Moscow's position on this issue, recently reiterated at an East-West conference held in Vienna, holds that "every country must repay its own debts."† Loans of this magnitude induce among Western bankers solicitude for the economic well-being and benevolence of their Eastern European debtors, and makes them beholden to détente, regardless of its political costs.

The other economic weapon is energy, of whose strategic importance the Soviet leadership had become aware long before it even dawned on Western politicians. In addition to placing itself in a position to impede the flow of Middle Eastern oil (of which more later), the USSR has sought to make Europe and Japan dependent on direct Soviet energy supplies, especially natural gas. To this end, it has established the practice of repaying in gas the costs of transmission pipes supplied by foreign concerns. West Germany is said to rely already for one-quarter of its natural gas on Soviet resources; and if negotiations now in progress for further cooperation in this field are successful, its dependence will increase further. What this development portends became apparent during the October 1973 war when the Soviet Union abruptly suspended gas deliveries to Veba, Germany's largest energy company, apparently in order to pressure that country not to support Washington's pro-Israel policies.

A list of all the other instrumentalities which the Soviet Union employs in its global strategy would be long and diverse. Among them would have to be included such seemingly unpolitical matters as family relations. The broadening of contacts between relatives separated by the border between East and West Germany which followed the Helsinki accords, provides the Communists with useful political leverage, the fear of their disruption being often cited by Bonn circles as a strong reason for preserving détente.

Of all the instrumentalities at the Soviet Union's disposal, it is the military that occupies pride of place. Soviet imperialism (this also held true of Czarist imperialism) is a military phenomenon *par excellence*, and in proportion as Soviet combat power grows, both absolutely and in relation to the West's, it tends to push into the background the political manipulation on which the regime has had heavily to rely earlier. Increasingly, Soviet spokesmen call attention to the shift in the military balance in Russia's favor as a decisive fact of the contemporary world,

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, XXXI, pp. 70-71.
† *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, October 10, 1979.

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and boast of the ability it gives their country to frustrate America's attempts to respond to Soviet initiatives.

It is sometimes difficult for people who are told of the low living standards of the Soviet Union's population and of the inefficiency of its economy to believe that such a country can present a serious military threat to the West. They ignore the fact that wealth and technical inventiveness, in which the West has an indisputable lead, do not make for military might unless they are harnessed in the service of defense. They further ignore that, conversely, a relatively poor country, as long as it has more than a minimal industrial-technical base, can offer more than a military match for its neighbors once it decides to allocate the necessary resources for war. Japan is an industrial and technological power of the very first rank. Yet because it has chosen to rely for its defense on the United States and forgo a military establishment commensurate with its economic power, its armed forces are one-half in size and a fraction in effectiveness of those of Israel, a country with one-thirtieth of Japan's population and one-fortieth of its GNP. As concerns the Soviet Union's low living standards, it should be obvious that when a country with its huge industrial plant cannot satisfy its population's needs for consumer goods, the reason must be sought not in incapacity but rather in the deliberate diversion of industrial resources to other than consumer needs. In other words, the fact that its population suffers a low living standard attests not to Russia's inability to threaten us militarily but rather to the opposite.

Russia has always tended to devote a disproportionate share of its resources to the upkeep of the armed forces: in the reign of Peter the Great, for example, more than nine-tenths of the state budget was allocated for that purpose. A large military establishment helped conquer new territories for Russia's growing population as well as to maintain order within the empire. High Czarist functionaries were well aware how much of the international influence that imperial Russia enjoyed was due to its ability to threaten small and great powers along its immensely long frontiers.

The principal weakness of pre-1917 Russian armies was a low level of supporting industry and transport, and of all those other non-military factors that World War I revealed to be of decisive importance in modern warfare. The lesson was learned by the Bolshevik leaders who studied with admiration Germany's extraordinary performance in that war; as soon as they seized power they put into effect the home-front mobilization measures initiated by Germany but made even more effective in Russia by the abolition of private property and the introduction of the universal obligation to render state service. Stalin's Five Year Plans, for all the noise about constructing socialism, were as thoroughly military in their intent as were Hitler's Four Year Plans.

The conglomerate nature of the Soviet regime makes it eminently suitable for purposes of military mobilization. If the Soviet government so decides, it can lavish on the defense sector of the economy manpower and resources in the quantities and qualities required, and let the consumer sector fend for itself. The mightier the industrial base, the more rapid under these conditions can be the expansion of the armed forces, inasmuch as the allocations to the civilian sector can be kept relatively constant while the bulk of the growing surplus is turned over to the military. And, of course, there are no recalcitrant legislatures or inquisitive media to raise questions about the need for such heavy defense outlays.

Thus it happens that neither détente nor the arms-limitation agreements accompanying it, SALT I included, have produced a dent in the upward curve of Soviet defense appropriations. A recent study by William T. Lee, a specialist with long CIA experience, estimates that the share absorbed by the defense sector of the Soviet Gross National Product has grown from some 12-13 per cent in 1970 to perhaps as much as 18 per cent in 1980; and since the Soviet GNP during this decade has also kept on growing, the absolute amounts given to defense have risen yet more impressively.* Incidentally, in the same period (1970-79), U.S. defense expenditures as a share of the GNP have declined from 7.5 per cent to 4.6 per cent, and in constant 1972 dollars, from $85.1 to $65.0 billion.

ALTHOUGH the Soviet military seem determined to catch up to and surpass the United States in all the service branches, they assign the central role to strategic-nuclear weapons. These the Soviet military theorists regard as the decisive weapons of modern warfare. All the available evidence furnished by theoretical writings and observable deployments indicates that the Soviet General Staff does not share the prevalent U.S. view that nuclear weapons have no place in a rational strategy except as a deterrent. There exists a high degree of probability that in the event of general war the Soviet Union intends to use a part of its strategic arsenal in a devastating preemptive strike which would make an American retaliatory strike suicidal and possibly inhibit it altogether. The stress on large throw-weight combined with high accuracies of its ICBM's is a good indication that the Soviet Union intends to develop a first-strike capability.

The refusal of the American scientific community, which has been largely responsible for the formulation of U.S. nuclear strategy, to take seriously Soviet nuclear doctrine can charitably be described as an act of grave intellectual and political

* "Soviet Defense Expenditures in the Era of SALT," United States Strategic Institute Report 79-1 (Washington, D.C., 1979), pp. 10-11.

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irresponsibility. Owing to it, in the coming decade the United States will find all three legs of its "triad" under growing threat which will not only make it difficult to respond to aggressive Soviet moves, but will also free the Soviet Union from those restraints which had inspired it to adopt the policy of détente in the first place. Once the nuclear balance will have become highly tilted, American crash programs will likely be discouraged by the same exponents of unilateral restraint who have helped bring the imbalance about, on the grounds that at this point any sudden moves would be "destabilizing" and could provoke the Soviet Union into a preemptive strike.

The strong Soviet commitment to the process of so-called "arms limitation" does not invalidate the contention that it operates on a first-strike doctrine. As has become evident since 1972, SALT I has had no significant influence on the development of Russia's strategic offensive forces. The same may be said of SALT II which, if ratified, would exert only a minimal effect on future Soviet deployments, while inhibiting and in some cases precluding important U.S. responses (such as long-range cruise missiles and protective shelters for the Minutemen missiles). Adopting for negotiating purposes the American "Mutual Assured Destruction" doctrine, the Soviet Union has been able to push through, at a relatively small price to its own deployments, severe restrictions on those of the United States.

Nuclear missiles, however, have not only a military utility: they are equally and perhaps even more useful as a means of political and psychological suasion. Russia's growing nuclear arsenal inculcates in influential Western circles a sense of all-pervasive fear which induces a spirit of accommodation. Once the view gains hold that there is no defense against nuclear weapons, it becomes not unreasonable to advocate avoidance of disagreement with another nuclear power as the highest goal of foreign policy. The following sentiments expressed by Congressman Jonathan Bingham of New York are quite typical of this body of opinion:

> *Above all,* we must remember that the Soviet Union remains the world's only other superpower—the only country in the world capable of destroying us. Maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union must be our *paramount* objective.*

I wonder whether Congressman Bingham has thought through the implications of his words. For he is, in effect, urging that we subordinate all our national interests as well as our ideals of freedom and human rights, and whatever else many of us regard as "paramount," to another criterion, namely, survival; and that in line with this criterion, we should seek accommodation with that country which can deny it to us. (Only we: there is nothing in this passage to suggest that the Soviet Union has a similar obligation toward us, the only country in the world capable of destroying it.) When this kind of thinking becomes prevalent, a nation loses the freedom to act in self-defense: psychologically, the white flag of surrender is up and sending unmistakable signals to the adversary. It takes little imagination to picture what effect this kind of thinking must have on the Soviet leaders: it virtually incites them to keep on increasing their nuclear preponderance, given that the greater their theoretical capability to destroy the United States, the louder the voices in the United States demanding that accommodation with the Soviet Union be made the "paramount" objective of national policy.

Soviet global strategy is implemented by means of pressures exerted at various points of the globe in a bewildering succession of shifts that makes it difficult to discern patterns and causes some observers to interpret it as a mere exploitation of random opportunities. But this is not the case. Just as Soviet defense strategy calls for the disposition of forces around the Queen of the chessboard, namely, nuclear-tipped missiles, so its territorial strategy aims at the enemy's King, the United States. The latter is the only country with the wealth and power to frustrate Soviet intentions: the fall or even isolation of that "citadel of international imperialism" would allow the rest of the world to be picked up at will. A world in which the United States carries no weight comes automatically under Soviet hegemony. The reduction of the United States, therefore, is as essential to the Soviet Union as the elimination of Carthage was to Rome.

But this objective cannot quite be achieved by a succession of Punic wars: military conflict with its principal adversary is the least palatable of the alternatives open to Moscow because the U.S. nuclear arsenal can never be entirely suppressed and it is always able to inflict, no matter what the balance of power, devastating punishment. Hence, except in the realm of ideological warfare, to which the United States attaches no importance and where the most venomous hate campaign can be carried on with impunity, assaults on the U.S. must assume indirect forms that undermine America's security without appearing to do so.

This aim is best attained by detaching Europe and Japan from the United States and pulling them into the Soviet orbit: the addition of West European and Japanese industrial capabilities to those of the Soviet bloc would alter immediately and in a most dramatic manner the global correlation of forces in the latter's favor. Here economic statistics speak for themselves. The annual Gross National Product of the Warsaw Pact countries for 1977-78 was estimated at $1 trillion; that of the United States at $2 trillion; that of Western

* Victor C. Johnson, co-author, *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1979, p. 919; emphasis added.

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Europe at somewhat above $2 trillion; that of Japan somewhat under $1 trillion. By this yardstick, the present correlation of economic forces is 5-to-1 in favor of the West; but it shifts to 4-to-2 in favor of the Communist bloc once Western Europe's and Japan's links with the United States are severed. Even if one allows for a 50 per-cent decline in European and Japanese productivity as a result of such a change (has it not been said that under Soviet domination the Sahara would promptly experience a shortage of sand?), Moscow could still confront the United States as at least an economic equal.

But an assault on Europe and Japan is risky, because they are protected by forces with large U.S. contingents as well as by the U.S. strategic deterrent. Hence, here too an indirect strategy is preferable.

The Soviet Union may be said to be laying siege to Western Europe and Japan in the same manner in which medieval castles were blockaded prior to the introduction of gunpowder—that is, by a systematic effort to cut off the flow of reinforcements and supplies: reinforcements of manpower and material from the United States, and supplies in the form of fuel and metals from the Middle East and South Africa.

In the event of war, there would be activated a giant sea and air lift pouring troops and material from the United States to the European front. To disrupt this flow, the Russians have constructed a powerful ocean-going navy, centered on submarines and concentrated in ports of the Kola peninsula. This navy would have the task of penetrating the Iceland-Faroes-England gap and striking at American convoys.

As POLITICAL backing for this naval strategy, the Soviet government exerts relentless pressure on the Scandinavian countries, sometimes directly, sometimes through the agency of Finland. To relieve that pressure, Norway and Denmark have for a long time refused the stationing of NATO troops and nuclear weapons on their territory; this act of self-denial has by now become part of the status quo which the Soviet Union jealously guards and is unlikely to permit to change. The integration of Soviet and Finnish railway lines and the construction in Finland of highways pointing in the direction of Norway strongly suggest that in the event of hostilities the Russians would strike fast to seize Norwegian ports and airfields, as Hitler had done in 1940. Sweden, not a member of NATO, is frequently harassed with accusations of violating its neutral status. It was apparently in response to Soviet browbeating that the Swedes consented to supply the USSR with a floating drydock capable of servicing a giant aircraft carrier presently under construction there. This Soviet activity in Scandinavia is given scant attention by the American media although its strategic implications for Europe are not much less than the more familiar Soviet challenge to the oil routes. Nine-tenths of U.S. war supplies to the European fronts would have to travel by sea, so that a serious Soviet threat to the North Atlantic sea lanes would be bound to have significant repercussions on the progress of European operations. (According to testimony by the recently retired commander of the Atlantic Fleet, Admiral Isaac Kidd, the Allied navies could maintain control of the North Atlantic sea lanes in face of this threat but only at a very high cost.)

The other Soviet pincer is directed toward the Middle East and aims at cutting off, in the event of hostilities, fossil fuels and minerals without which the economies of America's allies would not be able to function. The task here is much more difficult to accomplish than in the north, if only because the Red Army lacks naval and air bases in this area, but the intensity of the effort bespeaks the strategic design. Soviet forces have been positioning themselves over the years near three principal choke-points through which Middle Eastern oil supplies must travel en route to their destinations in Europe and Japan. One of these is the Straits of Bab el Mandeb which guard access to the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. Soviet and pro-Soviet forces stationed in South Yemen and Ethiopia would undoubtedly attempt to seize this waterway in the event of war. To the east lie the Straits of Hormuz, at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union has a long way to go to gain a stranglehold on these straits, but it should be noted that its occupation of Afghanistan has cut in half (from 1,100 to 550 kilometers) the distance Soviet planes must traverse to reach them. Finally, in Southeast Asia, where it has a friendly client in Vietnam, the Soviet Union is within reach of the Straits of Malacca, a major route for oil tankers on their way to Japan.

European and Japanese dependence on South African minerals, though less well known than their reliance on Middle Eastern oil, is nevertheless considerable. America's allies derive a high proportion of such industrial minerals as chrome, platinum, vanadium, and manganese from Rhodesia and South Africa. The intense involvement of the Soviet Union in the so-called "national-liberation" movements in sub-Saharan Africa, the quick exploitation of opportunities offered by the dissolving Portuguese empire, indicate the intention to deny these resources to the West.

THE flanking movement directed at Europe through Africa and the Middle East brings the USSR into contact with Third World countries and demands the formulation of a Third World political strategy. In the immediate post-Stalin years, the Soviet Union relied on alliances with so-called "national-bourgeois" movements, that is, movements that shared with the Soviet Union a common hostility toward the "capitalist" and "imperialist" West without being

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pro-Communist or socialist. They provided the kind of "temporary" allies whose utilization Lenin had recommended. The policy called for the exploitation of the anti-Western, anti-colonial sentiments of charismatic national leaders, some of them tainted with pro-Axis collaboration, as a means of eliminating the many strands of Western influence which remained in place even after formal colonial ties had been cut.

This strategy proved, by and large, disappointing. The Third World leaders whom the Soviet Union cultivated and supported with munificent aid turned out to enjoy too narrow a power base to serve as reliable allies: the sudden death of one or a successful coup against another could change the political climate in a given country overnight, turning it from a friend into an enemy and, in the process, sending billions of rubles' worth of aid down the drain. Such disagreeable reversals occurred in 1965 in Indonesia with the overthrow of Sukarno and a year later in Ghana with the removal of Nkrumah. Even worse were the consequences of the change in political orientation accomplished by Sadat after the 1973 war during which the Soviet Union had given him invaluable help. Once Sadat concluded that the concessions he desired from Israel could be procured for him by the United States but not by the Soviet Union, and that to qualify for U.S. support he needed to assume an anti-Soviet stance, the days of Soviet influence in Egypt were numbered. Moscow had to stand by helplessly while its immense investment in Egypt went to naught.

The defection of Egypt was the unkindest blow to Soviet policies in the Third World. Egypt was the linchpin of Soviet Middle Eastern strategy, the political-military base from which Moscow hoped to expand its influence both into East Africa and into the Arabian peninsula. It was the recipient of unstinting Soviet aid. To save its armies from impending disaster, the Soviet Union had engaged in a serious confrontation with the United States. And all this proved in vain once the "bourgeois-nationalist" dictator decided to reorient his foreign alliances.

Following Egypt's defection, Moscow seems to have undertaken a reappraisal of its Third World strategy, the results of which are becoming increasingly apparent. The new strategy calls for smaller reliance on "bourgeois-national" leaders like Sukarno, Nkrumah, and Sadat, in favor of minor political figures who owe their political status to Soviet backing. Such new Soviet friends in the Third World as the recently deceased Neto of Angola, Colonel Mengistu of Ethiopia, and Taraki and Karmal of Afghanistan are not national heroes with their own power base, however narrow, but small-time politicians dependent on Moscow's support. To place them in power—or to remove them from it once they have proven inconvenient—the Russians have not hesitated to resort to gangster-type "executions" by their military or security services. To buttress their influence, they bring in large numbers of permanent Soviet military "advisers," Cuban mercenaries, and security services from the USSR and Eastern Europe. Once these forces are installed, an infrastructure is created which is fairly impervious to sudden changes in native leadership. Because of the presence of Soviet, Cuban, and East European military and police personnel within their borders, it is unlikely that either Angola or Ethiopia will slip out of Soviet control as easily as Indonesia or Egypt did. To solidify their hold further, the Russians have assisted their hand-picked heads of state in carrying out mass murders of the opposition: according to the late Amin, the Taraki government in Afghanistan during its brief tenure in office executed 13,000 political prisoners. Massacres on a similar scale have been perpetrated in Ethiopia.

PROMISING as the new Third World strategy is, it is not without drawbacks. In countries in which it intervenes so heavily, the Soviet government assumes deeper commitments and finds it even more difficult to accept with equanimity the prospect of the area's slipping out from under its control, as its recent actions in Afghanistan have demonstrated. Here even the advanced type of control—hand-picked candidate, surrounded by Soviet military and police advisers, and made secure by extensive bloodletting of opponents—did not suffice and a full-scale occupation was deemed necessary.

It is doubtful whether the Soviet Union would have dared to intervene in the Caribbean as it is now doing were it not for a fortunate accident. In 1962, in what he seems to have regarded as a major diplomatic coup, President Kennedy agreed to guarantee Cuba from American invasion in return for the Soviet removal from there of its medium-range ballistic missiles. This guarantee proved so valuable to the Soviet Union, by providing it with a secure base for political subversion and military action in the Western hemisphere, that one is tempted to suspect that the USSR had planted the missiles in Cuba precisely in order to wrest just such an agreement. Cuba provides limited but potentially valuable air and naval bases to Soviet forces. It also furnishes troops and political cadres to carry out Soviet missions in the Middle East, Africa, and Central America. It is altogether the most dependable Third World ally, headed by a megalomaniac whose self-defined historic mission requires him to lean heavily on Soviet assistance.

There remains China. In regard to that country, the Soviet Union seems to have settled, after a certain hesitation, on a defensive strategy. In the early years of their quarrel, some Soviet leaders seem to have desired a quick, preemptive strike against China, but in the end cooler heads prevailed. The prospect of fighting another totalitarian regime, thousands of miles away, in an area

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poorly served by transport, was not appealing to a regime which, if it is to fight at all, must win quick, decisive victories. Soviet forces presently deployed in the Far East are formidable, to be sure, but they do not appear designed for offensive operations. The Chinese military estimate that in order to present a credible threat to them, the Russians would have to mass along their frontier between 2 and 3 million troops, which is several times the number they have there at present. Soviet missiles, too, are deployed mainly against NATO.

TO FRUSTRATE Soviet global strategy, it is necessary, first and foremost, to acknowledge that it exists. We must get rid of the notion, widespread among America's educated and affluent, that the Soviet Union acts out of fear, that its actions are invariably reactions to U.S. initiatives, and that it seizes targets of opportunity like some kind of international pickpocket. We are dealing with an adversary who is driven not by fear but by aggressive impulses, who is generally more innovative in the field of political strategy than we are, and who selects his victims carefully, with long-term objectives in mind.

Secondly, it is essential to overcome an attitude toward nuclear weapons which leaves us increasingly vulnerable to subtle forms of psychological and political blackmail. We once had a similar attitude toward cancer: it used to be thought that the mere mention of this disease brought it about. In fact, however, open discussion of cancer has led to early diagnosis and treatment, and considerably reduced the danger of death from it. Nuclear weapons are a kind of cancer of the international body politic. Awareness of their actual (rather than imaginary) dangers can lead to sensible measures being taken to reduce the risk of nuclear war breaking out and to keep casualties low should it nevertheless happen. Unless we are prepared to confront this danger, the growing Russian preponderance in strategic weapons will leave us in a position where we shall have no choice but to capitulate to Soviet demands whenever they are backed with the threat of war.

Thirdly, we should take an honest look at our alliance system which has deteriorated to the point where its utility seems more psychological than real. For some time now NATO has been a one-way street: the United States underwrites the security of Western Europe against Soviet attack, but its West European allies feel no particular obligation to support the United States in its confrontations with the Soviet Union in any other part of the world. This holds true even of the Middle East where Europe's interests are, if anything, yet more directly involved. Such behavior encourages the Soviet leaders to act aggressively in the Third World, in the knowledge that here the United States will be confronting them alone, and that such confrontations serve to exacerbate America's differences with its allies.

Fourthly, we must correct as rapidly as possible the skewed military balance, especially where strategic and naval forces are concerned. If a commensurate effort is undertaken by Western Europe and Japan, and if the mutual obligations of our alliance are made more equitable than they now are, then Soviet expansion into the Middle East and Africa ought to prove costlier and therefore less attractive.

The ultimate purpose of Western counterstrategy should be to compel the Soviet Union to turn inward—from conquest to reform. Only by blunting its external drive can the Soviet regime be made to confront its citizenry and to give it an account of its policies. It is a well-known fact of modern Russian history that whenever Russian governments suffered serious setbacks abroad—in the Crimean war, in the 1904-05 war with Japan, and in World War I—they were compelled by internal pressure to grant the citizenry political rights. We should help the population of the Soviet Union bring its government under control. A more democratic Russia would be less expansionist and certainly easier to live with.

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After Afghanistan, What?

Edward N. Luttwak

THOSE of us who have been warning for some years that the military balance was shifting in favor of the Soviet Union, and that the consequences would unfailingly become manifest in harsh reality, have been sufficiently vindicated by events to resist the temptation of celebrating successful prediction—especially since we failed to prevail over the counsels of passivity soon enough to avert our present, sinister, predicament.

It is worth recalling the stages of the debate. In the years of paralysis and confusion of the early 1970's two arguments were advanced by the respectable to oppose the upkeep of American military strength and the restoration of a foreign policy that would actively resist Soviet power. The first, especially popular in academic circles, was that military power as such had become ineffectual for both the Soviet Union and the United States: the two could not fight one another without suicidal results, and neither could they usefully employ force against others in a world of aroused nationalisms. Armed conflict, then, was simply passé in a world characterized by "interdependence." When presented in the full-dress jargon of contemporary American political science, such contentions acquired much academic authority, and indeed they still remain lodged in the textbooks that are employed in many of our universities.

The policy prescription derived from this line of argument was simple: since the Soviet Union was merely trying to establish a symbolic parity in arms, the United States need not compete with it. And if nevertheless the Russians foolishly persisted in adding to their armed power beyond that point, the United States would lose nothing thereby, since the Soviet Union would merely ascend to a more costly plateau of impotence.

The second argument was heard from a whole variety of voices, ranging from the eminent retired diplomat, George F. Kennan, to plainly self-seeking businessmen. On the authority of their personal acquaintance with the country and its leaders, such men declared that the Soviet Union had at long last become a status-quo power, satisfied with what it had, and that the Kremlin leaders were "moderate" men, essentially peaceful. By the suggestion that Soviet intentions were not in any case aggressive, the argument that the growth in Soviet capabilities would be harmless was much reinforced. (In Kennan's view, this meant that only American military power would be harmful, to the national economy and to the conduct of our foreign policy—which a powerful defense establishment would seek to "militarize.") Here also the policy prescription was self-evident, and devastatingly influential if only because of the eager deference with which such views were publicized in the quality press.

Once the Soviet Union began in 1975 to act in warlike fashion, relying on its new strategic-nuclear strength to provide cover for the whole array of naval forces, long-range air transport, and weapons shipments that sustained the direct combat of Cubans and Vietnamese, both arguments were undone at once. Plainly, the leaders in the Kremlin had not lost the ambition to reshape the world by military force as opportunity allowed. At the same time, their evident ability to use force successfully to decide the outcome of the conflicts in Angola, Ethiopia, and Indochina swiftly demolished the academic theory that held military force to be useless in our time.

By the later 1970's it had become obvious that behind the two arguments with all their claims and elaborations there was nothing more substantial than one crude generalization, and one inexcusable delusion. In the former, the American defeat in Vietnam was misunderstood to mean that all would fail everywhere, including the Soviet Union in the Third World. In the latter, men claiming great expertise in Soviet affairs had somehow come to believe that the processes of ruthless power accumulation through which party-men gained promotion step by step would produce leaders at the top who would be uninterested in power and its increase.

SUSTAINED by their resilient authority in the media and the institutions of learning—an authority which owed much to their

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legitimization of the easy course of abdication and retreat—the advocates of passivity overcame the complete collapse of their arguments with remarkable ease. Leaving the conclusions unchanged, they merely put forward new arguments. Instead of offering us theories of supposedly universal validity, and propositions about the fundamental nature of the Soviet Union, they now admonished us to avoid the superpower provincialism that would relate everything to the East-West conflict: it was *local* circumstances and *local* forces that were shaping the contentions of the day. Soviet military power, we were told, was at bottom irrelevant to what happened in Angola, Ethiopia, or Indochina; only the superficial would allow their attention to be detained by the Soviet airlifts and the inflow of Soviet weapons that accompanied such episodes. Actually it was the locals who were truly in control of the action, and the Russians were merely providing the instruments. And we were even invited to speculate on the possibility that Cuban expeditionary forces were actually fighting for the cause of Castro's revolutionary idealism rather than serving as tools of Soviet policy; the Russians were merely arming, training, and delivering Castro's men, but for Castro's purposes and not their own.

Once the argument was thus translated from a strategic into a purely local perspective, the rest was easy. Why should the United States object to what was happening in Angola, etc., when the outcome of each conflict was so positively desirable from our own point of view? In Angola itself, a regime approved by both the Congressional Black Caucus and the Gulf Oil Company had prevailed over rivals tainted by their association with a corrupt Mobutu and, worse, the South Africans. In Ethiopia, the multinational force commanded by Colonel-General Petrov had merely restored the universally recognized boundaries of that country, violated by the Somali invasion and regionalist uprisings. Even in Indochina, where a country's sovereignty was terminated, the Pol Pot regime thereby displaced was of such outright murderousness that no protest was admissible. Since in each case the effect of the Soviet action was actually constructive from our own point of view, it was foolish vanity to oppose the outcome merely because the issue was decided in Moscow rather than Washington. So we were told.

All this was very persuasive, except that it was a little too obvious that equally persuasive explanations would have attended any other outcome brought about by Soviet power. In Angola, any faction supported by the Soviet Union would *ipso facto* have become "progressive" and would therefore have gained the support of the Congressional Black Caucus, just as it would have received the endorsement of the Gulf Oil Company because it would have won. With the United States paralyzed, that outcome was inevitable, as was the fact that only the South Africans would remain to support the other side—further proof that the Soviet-backed faction was "progressive." In the case of Ethiopia, had the Russians chosen to arm and reinforce the Somalis, we would have been told that the "Wilsonian" principle of national self-determination should prevail over the suspect legality of colonial boundaries. The same voices that deplored our refusal to celebrate the restoration of Ethiopian sovereignty over the Ogaden achieved by Soviet power, would have reminded us that the region is inhabited by ethnic Somalis, and they would have asked in rhetorical style why the United States was so obdurate as to stand in the way of nationalism, the strongest (most "progressive"?) force in today's world. In the case of Indochina, if the Chinese had obtained Hanoi as their own client, the Russians would have emerged as the protectors of Cambodia and Laos, and those who in the event found themselves applauding the downfall of Pol Pot would then have invited us to give due credit to Moscow's support of the independence of small nations.

Those who for one reason or another refuse to resist power unfailingly find some convenient principle whereby virtue may be seen in the result. Indeed, one consequence of adverse changes in the balance of power is precisely to reshape men's conceptions of what is tolerable, acceptable, and even desirable. It is precisely by such mental conditioning that military power can earn its keep even without war.

THUS in the later 1970's an old story was repeated. Why object if Hitler reoccupies the Rhineland, an integral part of Germany, universally recognized as such? By what right can outsiders object if Austro-Germans and German-Germans are at last reunited in a national state? Why should men in the enlightened 1930's be bound by the vengeful restrictions fossilized in the Versailles Treaty? Why should a war be fought to suppress the national aspirations of the Germans of the Sudetenland?

In the 1930's neither great stupidity nor malevolence was needed to embrace the principles that would comfortably justify inaction in the face of power manifest and growing: it sufficed that there be no consistent, that is ideological, objection to totalitarian government. Once the ideological aspect was ignored, perhaps because of a lack of faith in the democratic alternative, it was easy enough to see merit in the results brought about by the growth of German power.

In our own times, the antagonist is very different from Hitler's Germany, and the conditioning process—the insidious influence of the balance of power on our minds—much more pervasively effective. For one thing, the Soviet Union is much

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more powerful than Hitler's Germany, both relatively and absolutely: relatively because there is now no quiescent continental power behind the United States ready to restore a shattered balance, as the United States itself once stood behind an England and a France directly challenged by Hitler; absolutely, because Hitler's Germany lacked the self-sufficiency of materials and the world-destroying weapons that characterize Soviet power today. And then also, the Soviet Union does not actively dissuade defeatist propensities as much as Hitler did by selective persecutions and flagrant gangsterism. The Russians, even now, are still bound by certain hypocrisies of conduct and by the dim residues of a humanitarian conception which remains lodged in the official ideology. Thus both the greater power and also the less obvious bestiality of the Soviet Union conspire to dull our perceptions.

What on the other hand does recall the 1930's is that once again it has become distinctly unfashionable to insist that totalitarianism itself must be resisted, and not merely such of its episodic manifestations as are brought to our attention in the travails of famous dissidents. Even many of those who are entirely unsympathetic to the Soviet Union nevertheless much prefer to stress practical motives and tangible interests in arguing the need to resist its expansion—and then of course China becomes part of the solution, instead of being recognized as a variant of the very same problem. Moreover, we have some in this country—a group varied enough to include both Andrew Young and Senator Edward Kennedy—who honestly seem to find it very difficult to concentrate their minds on the permanent evil of totalitarianism, even while being enthusiastic in their condemnation of pro-American but authoritarian states whose very substantial residual liberties they take for granted even when it is those very liberties that allow us to hear the opposition voices which (quite properly) complain of political repression. In any case, to ignore the ideological dimension of the East-West struggle in the attempt to contend directly with the "reality of power" condemns us to a misperception of that very reality. Far from being an impediment to our understanding of the practical strategic problems that confront us, a constant attention to the ideological struggle is indispensable if we are to assay correctly the balance of military power, and the predicament that the present imbalance has created.

All this by way of warning. The time allowed us to hesitate before launching broad action to restore our strength has fully expired, and yet even now, in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, newly minted arguments have emerged which minimize the scope of what has happened—arguments which by implication deny the need to restore our military strength and reactivate a foreign policy of broad resistance to the Soviet Union.

The most important of the post-invasion arguments offered by the advocates of passivity is that the Soviet Union acted only in self-protection. Faced with the risk that a fanatically Islamic regime would come to power in Kabul, fearful that such a regime would inspire widespread dissidence among the Muslim populations of Soviet Central Asia, the Kremlin was forced to send its own troops to suppress an "Islamic rebellion" which the Afghan forces loyal to the Soviet-controlled regime could not do themselves. And because the Afghan President actually in power was unwilling to cooperate with an outright occupation (even though he himself was a Soviet client), or perhaps simply because he was judged ineffectual by the Kremlin's experts, the Afghans had also to be provided with a new President, who was duly delivered in the baggage of the invading Soviet army.

What this theory suggests, of course, is that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is not evidence of a shift in the balance of power but rather merely a symptom of Soviet insecurity. It is thus implied that no further acts of aggression need be feared: the Soviet move, an "essentially defensive reaction," is inherently limited in scope.

Superficially plausible in its conjunction of the undoubted fact that Soviet Central Asia is full of Muslims with the recent and spectacular outbreaks of Muslim fanaticism in Iran and elsewhere, this theory nevertheless rests on a whole chain of increasingly demanding assumptions: that the Kremlin is afraid of Muslim dissidence in Central Asia (very likely indeed); that the Muslim populations of the USSR could be seriously influenced by events in Afghanistan even though they regard themselves as culturally much superior (doubtful: Portuguese may imitate the revolutions of the French, but not vice versa); that the prospective Muslim regime in Kabul would be perceptibly more militant and inflammatory than the Muslim regime already established in Teheran (very hard to believe); and finally that the Kremlin would consider that the best way of insulating Soviet Muslims from Afghan Muslims was to send tens of thousands of the former to invade the country of the latter, with all the official and unofficial contacts that this must entail (a thing almost impossible to believe).

Add two further facts and what is left of the plausibility of the theory entirely dissolves. First, until now no Islamic government has made any significant effort to arouse the religious sentiments of the Muslims of Central Asia; now, however, several may do so, and the Kremlin must have anticipated the possibility. Second, we have no evidence at all that there is any significant Muslim dissidence in Soviet Central Asia. Nor should that be surprising, since Central Asia is the only portion of the whole empire that actually obtains ma-

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terial benefit from the Soviet system. While the vast majority of the other non-Russian populations of the Soviet Union see that fellow ethnics and kindred folk lucky enough to be outside the USSR enjoy a higher standard of living than themselves, the Muslims of Central Asia are materially far better off than the Muslims of Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, not to speak of the Muslims of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang).

Yet even if one accepts the theory that the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan for defensive reasons, it should give no comfort to any not wholly deluded. As the power of empires increases, new layers of insecurity that must be remedied by further expansion are invariably found. Thus Rome conquered the Latium to shield the city itself, Italy to shield Latium, Gaul by stages to shield first Italy and then prior layers of conquest in Gaul, and finally Britain because Western Gaul could not be secured if Gaullish Druids and other dissidents could find ready shelter among their fellows across the channel. In other words, the "defensive" characterization of the Soviet invasion offers no certain security for any country less remote than New Zealand (and considering potential rivalry over the Antarctic, even that is not a safe presumption). Once we dismiss such last-ditch attempts to minimize the import of what has happened, we can begin to confront the crucial question before us: why did the Soviet Union employ its growing power to invade Afghanistan? Obviously, if we knew the strategic purpose of the move, we could usefully anticipate any further moves that might now follow.

BY REASON of geographic proximity the Afghanistan-Persian Gulf nexus has an immediate plausibility. In purely military terms, the occupation of Afghanistan has the effect of bringing the Gulf of Oman, which forms the entrance to the Persian Gulf, within the *tactical* reach of Soviet military power. Operating from bases in southern Afghanistan, Soviet fighter-bombers could now interdict at will the vital traffic of oil tankers entering and leaving the Gulf; they could attack warships too, of course; and, more importantly, Soviet land-based aircraft could now neutralize the air-power superiority that the United States would otherwise enjoy in the immediate area by virtue of its naval aviation on board the great aircraft carriers. Since the navy air wings on board the carriers represent our one last major military advantage in the whole spectrum of nonnuclear forces, any reduction in their freedom of action amounts to a very serious loss in American strength overall.

Still in a purely military context, a Soviet overland drive to the sea could much more easily be accomplished by setting out from bases in southern Afghanistan to cross the deserts of Baluchistan (on the Iranian or Pakistani side, or both) than by way of the 1000-kilometer route that separates the Soviet border in the Caucasus from the nearest shore of the Persian Gulf. The very great advantage of the Baluchistan route is that the area in question is almost devoid of population, while by contrast the Caucasus route cuts across lands inhabited by fifty million Turks, Kurds, Persians, and Arabs. In both cases, poor roads in difficult terrain greatly restrict transit capacity, but against the feeble opposition that would meet them, Soviet forces could afford to travel light, using the roads for troop convoys to create the *fait accompli* of an occupation of the shore rather than for the heavy loads of ammunition that would be needed for serious warfare.

Along with the direct military advantages, the Soviet Union obtains a diplomatic advantage fully manifest even in the absence of conflict: its ability to intimidate the countries of the area has greatly increased now that the threat of direct Soviet military attack has become so vivid. Certainly it is not by accident, as *Pravda* would put it, that all the Soviet embassies in the region stand intact. It seems that one is not dealing with blind fanaticism after all: the mob is inclined to attack those who advertise their refusal to defend themselves or to punish such violations—and this is an inclination shared by the local governments which have the choice of controlling the mob or else letting it work its will. While hatred of the Soviet Union has no doubt increased, so has fear, and great military empires do not ordinarily seek love but rather the anxious respect that fear can best inspire.

These, then, would be the incentives of the invasion if its purpose were further to enhance the Soviet Union's military and diplomatic power over the Persian Gulf. Given the all too obvious importance of the region's oil resources, the prospect of gaining bases in Afghanistan—either to start war operations of its own, or to oppose an American intervention, or merely to strengthen the hand of its own diplomacy—was certainly a sufficient incentive for the Soviet invasion.

But before we accept this explanation and leave it at that, some objections should be seriously considered. First, how valuable in fact are the Afghan air bases in the light of the already great pre-invasion potential of Soviet air power? To be sure, it is useful for the Russians to have fighter aircraft positioned so close to the shores of the Gulf of Oman. But we must also remember that both the tanker traffic and warship movements in and out of the Persian Gulf could be interdicted even before the invasion, by Soviet medium bombers operating from bases inside the USSR. American aircraft carriers too were vulnerable to the large fleet of Soviet medium bombers and indeed any attacks upon the carriers would most likely rely on anti-shipping missiles, weapons too large to be launched from fighter-class aircraft, but standard

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equipment on the Soviet navy's 300-odd medium bombers.

Secondly, what is the net value of the overland route to the sea that the invasion of Afghanistan has virtually opened to the Soviet Union? Certainly, it is better than the direct Caucasus-Gulf route and offers a choice of violations between Persian and Pakistani Baluchistan. But it also has the great defect of leading not to, but away from, the major oil fields, which are clustered around the head of the Gulf a long way from the Baluchi coast, and moreover on the opposite shore. And why employ overland routes anyway? Against the very weak forces of the Saudis and the Sheikdoms, Soviet air-delivered infantry with a few light-armor vehicles (mainly for show) should do very nicely; and even against an American expeditionary force, Soviet airborne divisions would suffice for the position-taking exercise that a Soviet-American confrontation would mainly entail, neither side being at all likely to open fire upon the other.

Thus while the expansion of the Soviet empire into Afghanistan does enhance its power over the Persian Gulf and the whole region around it, these objections are sufficiently weighty to justify a search for alternative explanations of the Soviet move.

To do this our field of view must first be widened, and very considerably: it is the entire strategic picture that we have to consider and not merely the regional circumstances of Afghanistan and the surrounding areas.

For some time now, there has been talk of a Soviet "window of opportunity"—a period of several years in which the Soviet Union could count on a net advantage over the United States in strategic-nuclear forces. American obstinacy in pursuing arms control by unilateral restraint in the deployment of strategic-nuclear weapons, along with the energetic Soviet production of those weapons, has now brought this unhappy circumstance upon us.

Certainly the United States can no longer rely on a strategic-nuclear advantage to offset weakness in theater forces, and that, among other things, opens vast doubts about the security of the NATO alliance, whose very foundation is the American nuclear guarantee. It is, however, quite wrong to view the U.S.-Soviet strategic-nuclear balance in isolation. In fact, the Soviet armed forces have achieved or are about to achieve superiority not only in strategic-nuclear weapons, and not only over those of the United States, but rather in military capabilities overall, nuclear and not, and against the forces of Western Europe *and* China as well as those of the United States.

By perverse coincidence, the period 1968-75, in which the United States failed to build up its military forces (first because of vast expenditures in Vietnam and then because of budget cuts), was also a time in which Western Europe reduced defense *investment* for growth (partly because manpower costs greatly increased). Moreover, this was also, more or less, the period of the "Cultural Revolution" (1966-77) in China, when the ascendancy of the anti-bureaucratic faction (the "Gang of Four") greatly restricted the flow of new equipment for the Chinese armed forces.

During those same years the Soviet Union continued to invest steadily in the growth and qualitative improvement of its forces, adding each year to its expenditure at a rate usually stated as 4 per cent (real growth). This undramatic but constant increase, kept up year after year, has had its cumulative effects: in detail, the result is manifest in the mass deployment of new aircraft, armored vehicles, warships, strategic weapons, and in the whole connective tissue of supporting and ancillary forces, and also infrastructures; *in toto* the result is manifest in the fact that the Soviet Union could greatly increase its relative strength as compared to the West even *after* building a whole new panoply of forces and infrastructures to achieve a net superiority over a China transformed from ally to antagonist.

By any standards, the Soviet achievement has been a very great one, even if much facilitated by the sheer bad luck that made our own misconduct of the Vietnam war (and more foolish anti-war reaction) concurrent with the outbreak of adolescent fury that turned Mao's disenchantment with the Communist party of China into a force strong enough to disrupt the lives of nine hundred million people. That NATO-Europe then failed to assay the adverse trend, that it failed to recognize the task left to its own statecraft, that it failed to offset American weakness by applying some fraction of its growing wealth to military investment —all this was not of course bad luck, except insofar as the willful descent of entire national elites into self-satisfied provincialism may be so described. In any case, our own military decline was not offset by the growth in the strength of others also ranged against the Soviet Union.

The perverse circumstances that allowed the Russians to gain military superiority over a collection of countries much richer and more populous than themselves now shapes the world-wide military balance. Because of the delay of several years that intervenes between military expenditures and the actual deployment of armed forces, the fruits of the uncontested Soviet effort did not fully emerge until quite recently, and the Soviet advantage will continue to increase for some years almost regardless of what we, Western Europe, and the Chinese might all now set out to do.

Had the United States, Western Europe, and China simply continued to underinvest through the later 1970's and beyond, the 1980's would have been characterized by a growing and *open-ended* Soviet military advantage. Had things

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turned out that way, the pressure of Soviet intimidation on Western Europeans and Chinese would of course have steadily increased. But on the other hand, we could all have been assured of a time of tranquility, albeit dismal and doomed, since then the Soviet Union could have looked forward with confidence to a period of wholly decisive and uncontested military advantage during the later 1980's and beyond. Peace would thus have been assured today and over the next few years at the cost of an assured Soviet domination thereafter.

However, this is not to be. Again by coincidence, the gradual recovery of American realism about the outside world after 1975, the death of Mao and the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976, and the first stirrings of belated alarm in Western Europe have all created circumstances in which the decline in the military effort of each side has been reversed, so that a modest but accelerating recovery is now under way. Even at a net annual growth that is in reality well short of the much-publicized 3 per-cent U.S.-NATO budget target, the trend has now become adverse for the Soviet Union. With a combined economic capacity so much larger than that of the Soviet Union, even a sacrifice so slight does produce results for Americans and Europeans; with armed forces so backward, and arsenals so obsolete as those of the Chinese, even a modest flow of new equipment has an amplified impact on real capabilities.

Thus, instead of being free to expect an open-ended period of growing military advantage, the Soviet Union is now confronted with a *transitory* period of superiority that will end—on present trends—in the later 1980's, when the efforts of today and of the next few years will mature in the reality of American and other military forces armed, trained, deployed, and ready.

The lineaments of great danger are easily recognizable in this situation: if an edge in military power can normally be expected to encourage activism (but also make it less necessary since others will pay power its due in their diplomatic concessions), a transitory advantage is apt to make action positively urgent. Since the elements of military power are mostly rather perishable, equipment becoming obsolete and training dulled in a matter of years, the Soviet Union needs a great effort merely to maintain the high quality of its present forces, which have been made much more ambitious in quality as well as somewhat larger in size over the last fifteen years or so. To do more than maintain the relative advantage of today would require a greater effort still, and with roughly one-eighth of the Soviet national product already given over for defense, the Soviet leaders cannot easily offset the reawakening of their competitors by simply imposing a greater sacrifice on their population—whose existence is already a shoddy one, by standards of comparison which they themselves recognize.

Still, even so, one could not go beyond the assessment that there is a danger of war to predict its virtual certainty, if it were not for yet another perverse coincidence that now intervenes: the time period in which the "window" of Soviet military advantage is projected to close happens to coincide with the advent in full force of a restriction on the Soviet economy whose first signs are already with us. It is well known that the Soviet economy is not growing as fast as it used to do,* and the unfavorable estimate is that its growth will decline to very little or cease altogether by the mid-1980's, so that Soviet military growth can only continue if its share of the total product is increased pro rata.

One may cheerfully disregard the prognostications of economists, but this one actually reflects the prediction of demographers, and as such it is an altogether more serious matter. Apparently, the European population of the Soviet Union is not growing and is therefore aging; thus a rising proportion of those who enter the labor force are Central Asians and Transcaucasians, mostly Muslim and backward†; with this, worker productivity will decline, and much new investment will be needed just to maintain production levels rather than to increase them.

For the first time ever—if these projections turn out to be as accurate as they are persuasive—the leaders of the Soviet Union will not be able to look forward to the future with optimism as far as the productive capacity of the Soviet economy is concerned. And given the demographic cause of their economic problem, the Kremlin leaders must also be pessimistic about the socio-political future of the Soviet Union, that too being an unprecedented state of affairs. Russian nationalism made a neat replacement for a Communist ideology of waning appeal during World War II and even more so during its victorious aftermath. But it is scarcely a solid foundation for a Soviet regime whose subjects will increasingly be non-Russian, and indeed peoples that were conquered by Russians, often recently enough for the humiliation and sufferings to live on vividly in ethnic memory.

There is, moreover, the primary effect of ideological decline: elderly leaders, still living with a close recollection of the triumph of Bolshevism, nowadays find their own grandchildren thinking

* CIA "synthetic growth index" (total industry): 1961-65: 6.6; 1966-70: 6.3; 1971-75: 5.9; 1976-78: 3.8 (average annual growth percentages) in F. Douglas Whitehouse and Ray Converse, *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Vol. I, Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, October 10, 1979, p. 406.

† In 1970-79, out of 23.8 million net entrants to the work force, 10.5 million originated in the Russian Republic (RSFSR) and 8.6 million in backward areas. In 1980-89, out of 6.3 million projected net entrants, all but 0.4 million will be from backward areas, with the RSFSR work force actually declining by 1.2 million. Ibid., p. 417.

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more of Gucci and Pucci than of Marx or Engels. That too cannot inspire much optimism about the future of the Soviet regime, even if it were true that the highest leaders are unaware of the cycle of nepotism, cynicism, and pervasive corruption that is now characteristic of Soviet life by all creditable accounts.

ONCE these factors are admitted into the overall picture, the danger of conflict is greatly heightened. If military advantage prompts activism, in the search for ways of exploiting power otherwise perishable, and if a transitory advantage adds the urgency of a time limit to that intent, the combination of a short-lived military optimism with a long-term regime pessimism is a most powerful impulse to war—in the attempt to change an unfavorable future by forceful action.

Thus if, by war, the Soviet Union could achieve a permanent enhancement of its position in some decisive map-changing way, all would become easier in the future, even the possibility of reduced military expenditures being imaginable. Alternatively, successful warfare might seize valuable resources for the Soviet state, and then the advantage of such resources might serve to modify the future that now looms so unfavorable.

Either way, it is obvious enough that there is no more certain driving force to deliberate war than the conjunction of short-term military optimism and long-term national (or regime) pessimism. That indeed was the classic mechanism that brought war in 1914, when the Hapsburg army and court elites could see in war the only salvation against ethnic separatism; in war, they believed, all the plain folk would rally around emperor and army—the only multi-ethnic institutions of the empire—abandoning the journalists, teachers, and publicists who were preaching the cause of the Southern Slavs, of Czechs and Slovaks, of united Italy, and of all-Germany. And in 1941, that same conjunction persuaded the rulers of imperial Japan to act, men who obviously had great confidence in their navy but very little in Japan's ability to hold its empire against a resurgent America that had just begun to build warships and aircraft on an American scale.

Even so, the impulse to go to war might be resisted if the leaders of the Soviet Union lacked *operational confidence* in their armed forces. Such confidence is not at all the same thing as a generic sense of military superiority. In a pattern of expectations greatly reinforced by the experiences of World War II but in fact very much older, the rulers of Russia could retain faith in their country's ability to win wars even without having any great operational confidence in their armed forces. The enemy would attack and invade; Russian generals would then be revealed as incompetent, Russian plans irrelevant; ambitious new weapons would not work, and whole Russian armies would be lost. But by its own victorious advance the enemy would then be stretched out across the vast Russian lands, and rains and snow and ice would come to paralyze him; and then through rivers of blood, war-created Russian armies, newly formed, commanded by new battle-educated leaders, using methods newly learned from the enemy, would drive out the invader—and then advance the borders beyond the initial starting line. By such means has Russia expanded in its recent history.

This particular conception of its military strength, which closely paralleled a certain cultural self-image of the Russian as less accomplished but stronger in spirit than the West European, was not one that would incline Russian political leaders to use their military forces in a deliberate search for advantage. (All this indeed applies mainly to war in the West. In the East, against Central Asians and Chinese if not the Japanese, the Russian experience and Russian expectations have been quite different.)

Very different was the German conception of 1914, or the Japanese in 1941. The political leaders of the two countries plainly regarded their armed forces as sharp instruments of precision, which could be trusted to execute military operations just as they were planned, to achieve results set in advance to gain some great, war-winning advantage. It was not on a generic superiority of military resources that the Germans counted in 1914—indeed they saw themselves as inferior in resources overall—but rather on the ability of their forces to encircle and destroy the French armies in one great swift turning move that would require action entirely precise, regulated by marching plans exceedingly intricate. And the Japanese, with far greater eventual success, also trusted their naval aviators to execute an attack of very great difficulty, in extremely demanding conditions. In both cases, the necessary condition of the acceptance of war was, precisely, the operational confidence of leaders in their armed forces, trusting them to deliver what was promised—which was a great deal.

UNTIL quite recently, such confidence and trust could not be for Russians: *their* kind of military power, even if massive, had a blundering and uncontrollable quality that would disqualify it as a useful instrument of aggression, deliberate, precise, and purposeful. It was this military fact rather than any innate moderation that endowed Soviet conduct with a degree of prudence—a prudence much exaggerated and altogether misinterpreted by the Kennans of this world who saw as a chosen restraint of ends what was only an imposed restraint of means. It is most unfortunate that this powerful, peace-preserving inhibition upon Soviet conduct has now been removed.

The first clear sign of this undoubtedly momen-

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tous but largely overlooked change was manifest in 1977, when the Soviet Union stepped in to decide the outcome of the Ethiopian war. Colonel-General Petrov, *de facto* commander-in-chief of the defense of Ethiopia, embodied in his own person the advent of Soviet operational confidence as he elegantly orchestrated the whole array of local Amhari militias, Cuban armored units, East European technicians, the Soviet airlift, and Soviet arms to achieve the winning combination in that war.

To be sure, Soviet troops were not then directly involved, but Soviet prestige undoubtedly was, and in a most important way. For the Kremlin leaders were obviously out to prove that they, unlike the Americans, would effectively defend those to whom their protection was granted. Admittedly, too, the Somali invasion forces, the regional rebels, and the Eritrean secessionists facing Petrov were not quite up to the standards of the *Waffen SS Panzer Korps* in its best days. But it must be remembered that when the Russians staked their reputation on the outcome, they were going in to defend a shrinking enclave on the high Ethiopian plateau, whose only land link to the outside world was a single rail line to the sea interrupted by Eritrean sabotage twice a day. One has the uncomfortable feeling that if our own Joint Chiefs had been directed to help the Ethiopians, they would have demanded large forces and prolonged preparations to mount a slow-moving reconquest, to secure first the coast, then the land link, and finally the enclave for a major build-up of forces and logistic stocks prior to any counteroffensive. Petrov, by contrast, was flown in with a small staff to command an improvised multinational force, without having any possibility whatever to redeem failure in the manner traditional to the Russians, by throwing masses of divisions into the fray.

In Ethiopia we only caught a glimpse, but in Afghanistan the picture was fully revealed. The surprise airborne descent on Kabul, the special operations (including the use of deception and sabotage to paralyze the Afghan forces that might have been hostile), the willingness to rely on the swift follow-up of mechanized forces through narrow roads with many vulnerable tunnels and bridges—all present a familiar aspect, but one not at all Russian in style. It is rather the style of the German conquest of Oslo by a handful of men, of the seizure of the great Belgian fort of Eben Emael by glider toops landed directly on its roof, of the airborne conquest of Crete, of Rommel in Cyrenaica—it is quintessentially the style of the self-confident who mean to prevail over victim-forces (perhaps much larger) by swift, bold action and a simulated omnipresence that paralyzes the will to resist.

The Kremlin leaders who sent such forces into action to use such high-risk methods very obviously had acquired an operational confidence in them and their leaders that they had lacked as recently as 1968, when unresisting Czechoslovakia was flooded with invasion forces in numbers so large that the Soviet logistic system broke down at many points. Such an over-allocation went beyond all the normal bounds of prudence, and was a clear sign of a lack of confidence.

Of course the Afghans were thoroughly penetrated before the invasion by Soviet operatives, to the extent that the whole Afghan air force was seemingly in the Soviet service. Of course the Soviet Union had the capital advantage of territorial contiguity with its latest victim-land. But to assay the significance of the new phenomenon before us—of Soviet military forces not only self-confident but fully trusted to deliver by their political masters—it suffices to note one single tactical fact: it is reliably reported that an Afghan tank division was actually garrisoned in the environs of Kabul quite near the airport where the Soviet airborne troops were to land. A divisional force of full-weight battle tanks, even if very poorly handled, can wreck an airborne descent very easily, merely by driving onto the airfield and shooting at anything that moves. The Russians apparently relied on surprise, deception, and special-purpose covert action to immobilize the Afghan armor—they could certainly not count on being able to defeat it with the small number of light fighting vehicles that were flown in with the troops. To rely on such high-risk means to defeat a threat so inherently formidable to an operation so inherently fragile, denotes self-confidence of a high order, obviously matched by trust equally broad on the part of the leaders who sent in the troops.

If any would scoff at this, let them compare what happened in Kabul to the doings of the British at Suez in 1956, when the whole venture was crippled by the slow and visible preparation of a cumbersome full-scale expeditionary force, and this because of the insistence that all due precautions be taken to protect the British troops dropped by parachute against Egyptian armored forces—and this was armor much more remote from the landing zones than in the Afghan case, available in far smaller numbers, and mostly so newly delivered that Egyptian crews had hardly begun to train with the new Soviet equipment.

And if the British of 1956 are not accepted as a fair test, then let our own military men be interrogated: would they be willing to fly in an airborne division—of necessity lightly armed—in the immediate presence of a potentially hostile armored division? The answer would be a categorical negative, no matter how poorly one could rate the skill, motivation, and readiness of that armored force; it is simply the case that fifty-ton battle tanks can overrun foot infantry and their light air-delivered vehicles almost effortlessly if they catch them in the open spaces of an airfield as

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they are disembarking. And let our political leaders be interrogated: would they sanction the risk?

THUS we are now facing a Soviet Union that has changed in a way most ominous. The Soviet Union of ceaseless opportunism that would fill any local vacuum as a sneak thief in a hotel tries every door, but which would *not* deliberately go to war for fear that its forces would make a mess of things, has now evolved into a different kind of enemy, one that is plainly willing to add direct warfare to its abundant array of expansionist instruments: proxy forces, not only Cuban; arms supplies meant to upset regional balances rather than preserve them; political warfare by all possible means, from forgery to assassination, as well as propaganda, black, gray, and white; and of course a tireless diplomacy of threats and blandishments of punishment and reward—a diplomacy much more coherent than our own in recent years. Even before the new instrument of direct war was added we could scarcely cope with the sheer tenacity of the Soviet policy. Now we face the prospect of war as well.

It might seem, nevertheless, that the great sanction of nuclear destruction would still intervene to avert war. After all, even if the economic and political future which Soviet leaders must now foresee is bleak—and one should not underestimate the system's ability to retain control even in very unfavorable circumstances—the consequences of nuclear war must be rated as infinitely more catastrophic. To be sure, the Soviet Union's military superiority is sufficiently pronounced in the nuclear categories, from the "strategic" (intercontinental) to the tactical, to insure that others cannot rely on nuclear means to offset non-nuclear defeat, but its superiority is still not absolute. It does not insure immunity from nuclear retaliation. In technical terms, the Soviet Union does not now have, and cannot soon acquire, a *disarming* counterforce capability. This being so, one may straightaway rule out a deliberate Soviet war upon the United States directly, and also against NATO in Europe. There is no doubt that the American nuclear guarantee is no longer the reliable protector it used to be, as Henry Kissinger for one has noted. But in the NATO lands there are still many thousands of nuclear weapons large and small, and they are usefully scattered about in different countries: the very fragility of NATO's non-nuclear defenses makes it more believable that they would be used in the chaos and disaster of a losing war.

Unfortunately, there are several other theaters of action where the Soviet Union could achieve the conversion of its transitory military advantage into a long-term enhancement of its position by resorting to deliberate, purposeful, and safely non-nuclear war. One possibility would be to launch swift invasion columns to cut off the vast territories of Chinese Central Asia from the rest of that country. In the arid, open terrain of the region, the tactical advantage of mechanized Soviet forces over Chinese infantry would be greatest, and the combat value of Soviet air superiority would be maximized. At the same time, the very small population and its heavily non-Chinese composition would render a guerrilla resistance insignificant, while the Russians could count on their vast nuclear superiority to inhibit any suicidal Chinese intent to resort to nuclear weapons. (And against China, the Soviet Union must have a fully disarming counterforce capability.)

The assured strategic benefit would be to shift China eastward by 1,000 kilometers, and a concurrent campaign of non-nuclear bombardment against Chinese industry could retard that country's development very seriously. One possible benefit might be to precipitate the latent regional separatisms throughout China by exposing Peking's inability to defend the national territory, thus undermining its chief claim to authority. And since the Soviet Union would under no circumstances annex the area but rather turn it into a "Turkestan People's Republic," a nominally independent client-state such as Outer Mongolia already is, the Soviet ethnic problem would not be aggravated, and might instead be alleviated, perhaps in a major way, if immigration were to develop into the new state—an outcome that large-scale Soviet investments and ethnic preference* might well bring about. For the same reason, the diplomatic repercussions of the venture could be much reduced: the Russians would no doubt claim credit as liberators for engendering the national self-determination of the Turkic peoples till then under Chinese domination.

OTHER map-changing opportunities present themselves in Korea, where a Soviet-sponsored unification would greatly facilitate the longstanding Soviet attempt to pressure Japan out of the American alliance and into a weak neutralism. This would be most useful to the Soviet Union even if Japan is too large in population and too recondite in culture to be Finlandized. At the very least, a weak, neutral Japan could be induced to invest heavily in Siberian development, while avoiding investment in China.

As for Pakistan, map-changing could take the easier form of playing anvil to India's hammer to destroy that country's independence. As an alternative to the Turkestan scheme—and the two

* In the Sinkiang there are some five million Uighurs and .7 million Kazakhs; the Soviet Union has 5.3 million Kazakhs and 173,000 Uighurs. They, as well as the Kirgiz (1.4 million), might find a Turkic state attractive; in theory the Soviet Union could extrude more of its minority population by donating territory to the new state.

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would be incompatible—a unified India would *ipso facto* be greatly advantageous to the Soviet Union, since then it would be an effective strategic counterweight to China.

And then of course there are the various possibilities in and around the Persian Gulf, from the seizure of Iran's northern provinces to something on a wider scale; or else, starting from the Soviet base in Yemen, south-to-north political-military action, to change political structures in Arabia, if not the map.

To PREDICT which course of action will have the most appeal for the leaders of the Soviet Union is not the object here. What we for our part must now recognize once and for all is that such possibilities have now become actual Soviet options. That, finally, is the inevitable consequence of the imbalance of power through which we must now survive. Afghanistan was merely the weakest and least protected of the countries unfortunate enough to be directly adjacent to the Soviet Union. Now the others wait their turn, facing a Soviet military empire once again on the move.

As for us, now that the military advantages of the Soviet Union can no longer be concealed by delusionary or perhaps cynical claims that we are still "number one"; now that the transitory nature of that advantage creates a fixed urgency to convert perishable power into long-lasting results by decisive map-changing war, it is very important that we recognize the full significance of the new phenomenon before us. Never in their recent history have the Russians had this quality of operational confidence in their armed forces, and its emergence now completes the matrix that will lead to war unless we are very much luckier than we deserve to be.

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America Five Years After Defeat

Charles Horner

> Through failure [in Vietnam] we have now found our way back to our own principles and values and we have regained our lost confidence.
> —PRESIDENT CARTER, May 22, 1977

OF ALL the characterizations of the American experience in Vietnam, this is among the most misleading. However Americans may celebrate the unique character of their own history, it is beyond believing that we, alone among peoples, would emerge more self-confident from a large and conspicuous strategic defeat. Every country which loses a war pays a price for it. The greater the defeat, the more the politics of the aftermath will be defined by reference to positions and arguments sustained while the war raged. Thus, even though thirty-five years have passed since the end of World War II, the fall of France in 1940 remains relevant to French political divisions; in Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, and Scandinavia, the war lives on in other contexts.

Even so, the American defeat in Indochina differs from the classical experience. The consequences of our defeat, being neither so vivid nor so apparent as the presence of an occupying force in the nation's capital, remind us that whatever we lost in Vietnam, others have lost more. And because the price of defeat is not nearly so vivid, there is no ongoing attempt to fix responsibility for it. This latter point bears emphasis, for among all the foreign-policy disasters which have bedeviled states in recent times, Vietnam was unique in producing the general belief that failure there would have few adverse consequences. This, at least, was the dominant view when South Vietnam crumbled before the last North Vietnamese offensive of 1975. A war which had failed in part because there was no coherent theory of victory to bolster it ended in a debacle for which no theory of defeat was deemed necessary.

This was both surprising and predictable. Seven American administrations had backed an effort of one scale or another to "contain" the expansion of Communist influence in Indochina. All had formulated arguments and predictions about what would happen if that effort were to fail. By the time the war ended, however, the accumulated justifications for American policy had been so submerged by "anti-war sentiment" that all older forecasts had been forgotten.

In retrospect, the loss of the Vietnam war was widely accepted as a refutation of the world view of those who had "gotten us into it"; moreover, the defeat was taken as a confirmation of the general view of the "anti-war movement." To have seen the war as the result of a fundamental geopolitical miscalculation, or as an instance of unjustified intervention in others' internal affairs, or as the result of an institutional defect in the American system which allowed an adventurist military to dominate policy, was to anticipate more than tolerable consequences from our defeat there. Conversely, to have seen the war as instigated by totalitarian expansionists in the first instance was to foresee wholly different results from an American failure at resistance. In the first case, one would expect no especially adverse consequences, either for the Vietnamese, ourselves, or the world in general. In the second case, however, one would fully expect the totalitarian victors to press their advantage.

The distinction here was encapsulated in the two-part banner headline which appeared in the Washington *Post* on April 30, 1975, the day of the final American evacuation from Saigon: "Saigon Surrenders to Vietcong; Withdrawal Ends Role of U.S." This was the argument over past and future in a nutshell. Because Saigon was said to have surrendered to the "Vietcong"—not to an invading North Vietnamese army well-supplied with Soviet tanks and artillery—the end of a U.S. "role" in any aftermath could be announced. To have regarded our defeat as a victory for totalitarian expansion would have been to announce even harder times for the United States. On this point, the *Post*'s post-mortem editorial of the same day was seminal. It was entitled "Deliverance."

THUS, precisely because the war had failed, it was assumed that whatever had been predicted as the consequence of failure would therefore not happen. It was as if defeat itself had settled the argument over the consequences of defeat. Properly speaking, the war's op-

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ponents had no reason to use the *costs* of the war as a refutation of the *purposes* of the war. They *might* have been prepared to accept the fact that unhappy consequences could result, yet say that they were prepared to live with them; the price of defeat, they might have said, was exceeded by the price of continuing. A few—very few—of the opponents of the war did take this position. But in general this was not where the argument came to rest. It came instead to another place, the place of maintaining that, on balance, our defeat had been good for us, that it had taught us what are customarily called the "lessons of Vietnam"—the dangers of military "interventionism," of embracing "corrupt military dictators" in a misbegotten struggle born (in President Carter's phrase) of "an inordinate fear of Communism."

Even a cursory familiarity with modern history, however, would have caused one to doubt. Sooner or later the other shoe would drop. If the thud has not been heard already, anticipation has certainly been heightened. The 1980's began with a Vietnamese army poised on the border between Thailand and Cambodia. President Carter who, in May 1977, had spoken of the "intellectual and moral poverty" of our old policy in Vietnam felt constrained in February 1979 to reassure the visiting Thai Prime Minister that the United States still supported the integrity, stability, and security of Thailand. In this, he sounded like his predecessor, Lyndon Johnson; Johnson's administration had maintained to the point of hoarseness and exhaustion—and, finally, plain collapse—that American failure in Vietnam might well result in the presence of a Vietnamese army in, precisely, Thailand.

But we are already ahead of our story. Other countries besides Thailand were provoking the most profound questions about how well we could live with our failure in Vietnam. Cambodia, for example, had fallen into the hands of a group of homicidal maniacs, the first regime in history that seemed intent upon carrying out genocide against its own people. In itself, this was so bizarre and so horrible that no reasonable man could have predicted it. And being unpredictable, what happened in Cambodia could not be so readily linked with the forced unification of Vietnam achieved by the North Vietnamese army. Moreover, Cambodia and Vietnam were themselves at war soon enough, so that the complex causal relationships could remain obscure.

But the crimes of Pol Pot were perceived as a problem by subtler observers of the Indochina scene, and by cleverer creators of the dominant historiography of the Vietnam experience. There had been expressed some vague unease that the American defeat in South Vietnam had somehow engendered the events in Cambodia. But this incipient judgment was subject to a preemptive strike, most conspicuously the publication of William Shawcross's book, *Sideshow*. In a breathtaking *tour de force*, Shawcross laid the crimes of Pol Pot at the door of Nixon and Kissinger, arguing that the policies pursued by these two Americans had inexorably brought about the ruination of Cambodia. While this was a new moral burden for the United States to assume, it was eagerly embraced because it allowed developments in Indochina to remain well within the "anti-war" framework of explanation and the received Vietnam orthodoxies. Thus Tom Wicker wrote of Shawcross's book on June 1, 1979:

> Now a strongly researched new book confirms that the Americans most directly responsible for the terrible fate of Cambodia were not doves but Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger. They not only conceived the policy that spread the war across Cambodia; they carried it out in secrecy, with equal disregard for the Cambodian people and for the American constitutional process.
>
> The tale is a squalid one.

One senses in this preemptive strike a bit of overkill. For the theory of defeat developed by the Johnson administration in the 1960's hardly contemplated the emergence of a Pol Pot if the United States failed in Vietnam. Even though he is the supreme creation of modern totalitarianism, not even remotely descended from us, My Lai and all, Pol Pot is so grotesque that even unreconstructed hawks have been loath to pin him on the doves.

Still there are consequences enough of totalitarian victory—so well-precedented, so often seen in history, so easily documented, that anyone who believed that defeat in Vietnam would not have horrible effects was surely deluding himself.

Consider the American response to the plight of Indochina refugees in the summer of 1979. The massive voluntary departures, the forced exodus, the appearance of both "boat people" and "land people" were startling. Why had not the end of the war brought a happy future to that region?

A better question would have been: why were we so surprised to discover that the advance of totalitarian power produces refugees? The pattern was established with the Bolshevik victory in Russia in 1917. The old regime collapses, and there is a period of calm as a new regime consolidates its power. The oppression of selected groups begins, making the implications of totalitarian victory clear to the rest of the population. Those who can flee do so—before the new arrangement solidifies.

Conversely, there has never been a mass movement *toward* any totalitarian country, certainly not in Vietnam. The 1954 Geneva agreement provided for the movement of refugees, and about one million of them came south. The pattern continued *inside* South Vietnam during the course of the war itself. The movement of people was always away from the Communists, never toward them. No doubt, some of this flow was stimulated by the South Vietnamese government in order to

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drain the countryside of the popular sea in which the "guerrillas" were presumed to swim, but such practices do not detract from the main point. And flight from the Communists was also the norm in Cambodia. In Indochina millions did indeed "vote with their feet," as they had so voted in other places.

It was no mere lapse of memory that left the United States government unprepared for the refugee crisis which appeared in mid-1979. It was not anticipated and at first it was not believed; anticipation and belief would have called into question the validity of too many ideas which had fueled opposition to the war. Years ago, it had been argued that the flight from the countryside to the city reflected a desire to escape from an American-instigated war. Now it could only mean an even stronger desire to escape the consequences of a Vietnamese-imposed peace.

But that is not what had been hoped for, especially if one had assumed that the South Vietnamese government could be collapsed with only trivial consequences. Thus in February 1976, Senator George McGovern reported to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on a trip he had made to Vietnam a month earlier:

> . . . wartime rhetoric about a vindictive bloodthirsty people was tragically wide of the mark, as many Americans supposed at the time. Well-educated, highly civilized leaders of the both the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the South are anxious to heal both the internal and external wounds of war, and they are determined to retain the independence which they saw as the overriding aim of their struggles.

In July 1976, he wrote in the *Nation:*

> Now after all those years, and all those lives lost on both sides, Vietnam has been united in peace. It became one country of 40 million on April 25 when elections in North and South Vietnam put the separated halves back together again as one nation no longer divided by war—colonial, civil, or imperial.

These "well educated, highly civilized leaders" would soon send their armored divisions into Cambodia and their ethnic Chinese into the sea. It was as simple as that, but it was made to seem complicated.

So far as the refugees were concerned, the first line of defense was not to talk about them at all. At a press conference in Bonn on June 27, 1979, our then UN Ambassador, Andrew Young, referred to "the political problem being Vietnam's intention about some of its citizens and whether or not people are being encouraged to leave or driven out or whether there is a normal migration. . . ." In answer to the question, "Is there anybody who thinks that's a normal migration?" Ambassador Young said, "Probably not. But we also feel it doesn't make much sense to go around condemning people or trying to cast blame. And certainly we in the U.S. should hardly be in that position." In Ambassador Young's view, it was all somehow traceable back to the Vietnam war—which is to say, to the United States itself. "I think our main concern," he said, "is providing humanitarian relief to the parties involved."

YET the situation of the Indochina refugees became more compelling as more was learned about it. Inevitably, comparisons were drawn with the failure of the world to come to the rescue of European Jews in the 1930's. Former Under Secretary of State George Ball, writing in the Washington *Post* on July 5, 1979, brought these themes together—the Evian conference of 1938, the Holocaust, the "boat people," starving or drowning or dying of thirst—and then remarked, "our government is paralyzed."

In a way this was not true—for the government was not paralyzed in an organizational or institutional sense. Visas were issued, aid was provided, rescues were performed, money was spent, work was done. The paralysis—and here one borrows Ball's image for a different analysis—was the result of a kind of dread. It was a dread born, if not of a realization then at least of a plausible hypothesis that thousands, perhaps millions, had died because the American effort in Vietnam had been allowed to fail—and that the effort had failed because those who had opposed the war had been wrong about Southeast Asia, wrong about the consequences of totalitarian victory, wrong about the nature of totalitarian society, wrong about what an American defeat would mean. These propositions could not have been argued in polite society the preceding year. Indeed, they were not raised during 1979 either. And yet somehow, there was a sense that the evidence was beginning to accumulate and that someone was thinking the unthinkable and preparing to say it.

Ordinarily, this sort of revisionism would have occasioned little concern inside the government. But the present administration has more than a passing interest in the debate. Years ago, many wondered why President Nixon had embraced the Vietnam war—a "Democrat war"—when he really did not have to do so. In retrospect, it may be asked why President Carter embraced the general ethos of the anti-war movement, when he really did not have to do so either. In Carter's case, two different explanations have been offered—one, that he (a former hawk) had become a convert to the anti-war ethos himself and had therefore established in the foreign-policy apparatus those who had either become converts too or who had made their careers opposing the war; or, alternatively, that he did not know that he had installed the mainstream of the anti-war movement in his Department of State, and that the individuals in question took control of him—or at least of his public rhetoric about Vietnam.

Whatever the cause, the President was now com-

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mitted to the proposition that the American effort to sustain a non-Communist government in South Vietnam had derived from "intellectual and moral poverty." He appointed to influential positions men and women who had made their reputations in the public arena arguing that proposition, or some variant of it. Both he and they would have to give up much if the contrary proposition were ever to take hold. For the "legitimacy" of many of the individuals in his bureaucracy depended upon their having been "right" on Vietnam, if not "from the start," at least long enough. And because their view of the world derived in the main from their view of Vietnam, there would be difficulty aplenty if the fundamental axiom of their thinking (representative by now of the "political class," at least within the Democratic party) were to fall.

VIETNAMESE and Cambodian brutality finally forced an unavoidable public encounter between the American anti-war movement and Indochina's Communist "hegemonists." The most richly revealing aspect of it was sponsored by the United Nations, which in late July 1979 convened a fifty-two nation conference on the Indochina refugees. The American delegation to the Geneva conference was led by Vice President Mondale, a prominent Democratic liberal, widely thought to be the principal patron of many of those anti-war Democrats brought into the administration, and Iowa's former Democratic Senator, Dick Clark (who would later leave his new job as Ambassador and coordinator of refugee affairs to join the presidential campaign of Senator Kennedy). The Vice President gave the principal American speech at the Geneva meeting. Noting that "our children will deal harshly with us if we fail," he accused the government of Vietnam of pursuing "callous and irresponsible policies." He, too, invoked the example of Evian, saying that then, "the civilized world hid in the cloak of legalisms." He concluded on a similar note:

> Let us not be like the others. Let us renounce that legacy of shame. Let us reach beyond metaphor. Let us honor the moral principles we inherit. Let us do something meaningful—something profound—to stem the misery. We face a world problem. Let us fashion a world solution. History will not forgive us if we fail. History will not forget us if we succeed.

Perhaps it is unfair to say that the Vice President, in his discussion of the matter at hand, had himself hidden behind a cloak of legalisms—and moralisms. Yet his contention that this was somehow a world problem—which it was—nonetheless contained a suppressed premise—that now, as in the past, it was a problem beyond the reach of political and military *power*, but well within the reach of "world opinion." Thus Tom Wicker of the New York *Times*, foreshadowing what the Vice President would say in Geneva, had written on July 8 that those who disputed President Nixon's predictions of a "bloodbath" had no right to consider themselves "vindicated." For instead of a bloodbath, "there is a vast tide of human misery in Southeast Asia—hundreds of thousands of homeless persons in United Nations camps, perhaps as many more dead in flight, tens of thousands of the most pitiable forcibly repatriated to Cambodia, no one knows how many adrift on the high seas or wandering on the roads." Having taken no solace in this pyrrhic vindication, Mr. Wicker nonetheless proceeded to vindicate himself, assuring us that "the aroused opinion of the world will do more than anything else to halt what Vietnam has given us instead of a bloodbath."

The sophistry here is overpowering. Nixon predicts a bloodbath, but another form of massacre ensues. This establishes that Nixon was wrong about the war and that his critics were right.

DURING the Vietnam war period itself, it used to be argued that the Vietnamese in their negotiating position were perfectly correct in *not* separating the "military" from the "political" issues. At the same time, the government of the United States was urged to seek a "political" rather than a "military" solution to the war. A similar situation arose as to the "humanitarian" and "political" aspects of the refugee crisis. Once again, the Vietnamese and their international supporters, principally the Soviets, pursued a "two-track" policy. At Geneva, they were interested only in the humanitarian aspects, even as they argued there and elsewhere that the whole affair was nothing but base politics. *Izvestia* of June 29, 1979 commented: "Every Vietnamese citizen knows that the true culprits in the 'flight' of hundreds of thousands of people from Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea [Cambodia] are U.S. imperialism and the Beijing [Peking] expansionists." Continuing the thought, *Izvestia* of July 6, 1979 claimed: "Beijing's hegemonists, in their attempts to arrest the growth in the SRV's [Socialist Republic of Vietnam] prestige and influence in Southeast Asia with their natural cynicism and complete disregard for people's fate, instigated the mass exodus of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam."

Here was an unreported irony: finding Vice President Mondale and former Senator Clark—articulate and prominent doves—forced to take a position in the front line of resistance to a new and even more brutal wave of Vietnamese expansionism. But they seemed to display no discomfort. They appeared to do the best they could—focusing on the humanitarian aspects, that is—given the political history from whence they came. The Vice President's moral injunctions were correct and compelling. He accurately described how people ought to behave. Yet the international rebuke given Vietnam in no way compared with either the amount or the intensity of the abuse heaped

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on the United States while it was earlier trying to *prevent* what occasioned the conference. It does not even compare with the amount of abuse then heaped on Americans by Americans themselves.

It was thus easy enough for the Vietnamese to maneuver the United States, and the rest of the world, into a cul-de-sac. "Propaganda Win Seen for Vietnam on Boat People" declared a headline in the Washington *Post* on July 23, 1979. Ronald Koven reported from Geneva that

> Vietnam has turned a tactical retreat on the issue of refugees into a major propaganda victory, in the opinion of U.S. diplomats. . . . "It was brilliant," said a senior U.S. official. "They got everyone to thank them for ending a crisis they caused in the first place." . . . The Vietnamese even managed to get the implicit endorsement of UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim by maneuvering him into giving maximum impact to their decision to halt the flow of boat people. . . . Some staffers of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees went even beyond the American view that Waldheim had been cleverly manipulated by the Vietnamese. They expressed outrage that Waldheim should present as a political victory what is likely to be the creation of a giant prison to "protect" Vietnam's own people from the hazards of escape.

This movement had been sensed earlier. Consider the testimony of Foreign Minister Rajaratnam of Singapore. Speaking in Bali in late June 1979, Rajaratnam expounded on the relationship among the "humanitarian," the "political," and the *moral* in the most grim way:

> Whatever other weaknesses the Vietnamese may have, they do not see themselves as victims of circumstances. Had they done so they would not have brought to a halt the mighty war machine of a mighty power. They are not victims of circumstances but victims of their ambitions. They were not driven by anybody into Russian arms because they had a choice—free choice. They could have, as they had done for years, maintained strict neutrality between the Chinese and the Russians. They could have been nonaligned like us. They could have opted for peaceful reconstruction of Vietnam. . . . They did not do so because their ambitions required an alliance with the Soviet Union. Their journeys to ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] countries, the obvious prosperity, stability, and cohesion of these states forced them to conclude that if peaceful competition between socialist states and ASEAN states is the name of the game, then it might be generations before they caught up and surpassed the ASEAN nations and emerged the number one power in South east Asia. [They] saw ASEAN prosperity and solidarity. They said this is a danger to them and must be destroyed. So the name of the game has changed—not peaceful competition but revolutionary warfare in which they believe they can surpass the ASEAN nations. To play this game well they needed a Soviet alliance, Soviet friendship, and Soviet arms. The Vietnamese are no fools. They are not puppets, they sought the embracing arms of the Soviet Union willingly because they needed Russian arms to realize their ambitions. Let us not delude ourselves that we can win over Vietnam. Deng Xiao-Ping said they gave $20 billion to [the] Vietnamese. But when [the] time came [there came] no loyalty. What can ASEAN offer? $1 billion?
>
> The Vietnamese are ready, unless stopped, to drive out millions into the sea and onto our lands. Whether we like it or not our survival as viable states would compel us, however moved we may be by human compassion, to be inhuman. We have to be, we already are inhuman. We have no choice but to turn away hundreds and thousands of women, old people, and children into the open sea to face certain death. Let's not humbug ourselves. We are sending them to death. The world knows, Vietnam knows.
>
> We in ASEAN are not a deliberately callous people. But the Vietnamese are compelling us to be as barbarous as they are. They are putting us in a situation where . . . decent people have to be barbarous.
>
> The Vietnamese will no doubt find great satisfaction if they can reduce us to their level of inhumanity. Today when the Vietnamese face us they are somewhat shamefaced and guilt-ridden. They dare not look us in the eyes because they are the barbarians and we are the humanists. But who knows, by next year they might force us to do things which would make us no better than they are. We would be one of a kind, compelled to be one of a kind. They would have made us unwilling collaborators in their policy of genocide.

THE diplomat from Singapore spared us a reference to events of the 1930's so much a part of last summer's discussion of Indochina's refugees. But it would have added interest to his presentation. For example, the ship *Saint Louis* left Germany for Cuba in May 1939, with some 900 Jewish passengers aboard. The Jews were refused permission to land either in Cuba or the United States. The ship returned to Europe, where the passengers were divided among Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. Nazi propaganda made much of the American unwillingness to receive these people. As *Der Welthampf* put it: "We are stating openly that we do not want the Jews while the democracies keep on claiming that they are willing to receive them—and then leave the guests out in the cold. Aren't we savages better men after all?"

When a totalitarian state speaks to a democracy of humane obligations, even with irony, something is afoot. For the Vietnamese government last summer, the refugee flight was a problem traceable to economic difficulties and, therefore, remediable by means of (American) aid—not of course, to the refugees but to the government of Vietnam. Thus Nguyen Co Thach—then a Vietnamese for-

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eign ministry official, today Vietnam's Foreign Minister—complained to the American journalist Seymour Hersh in an interview last August that the United States and Vietnam had reached agreement on "normalization" of their relations in September 1978, but the United States had backed away (in Thach's view, in order to placate the Chinese). Hersh reported that Thach "repeatedly criticized the policies of the Carter administration, but he distinguished between what he called the government and the American people." Why this new American hostility toward Vietnam? "It is very bitter for the government to swallow the defeat" in the Vietnam war, Thach said, "but for the American people it is another thing. They are proud of their support of Vietnam during an unjust war."

This is a curious accusation to lay upon the American government, headed as it now is by someone who, having found the war an instance of "intellectual and moral poverty," would probably not quarrel with Thach's contention that it was "unjust" as well. Indeed, President Carter seems to have endorsed it. Speaking on national television on July 15, 1979, the President—who in May 1977 had claimed the recovery of confidence as one result of the Vietnam failure—now described a "fundamental threat to American democracy. . . . It is a crisis of confidence." He saw Vietnam as a major contributing factor: "We were taught that our armies were always invincible and our causes were always just, only to suffer the agony of Vietnam." Thus the President linked the military failure to a moral failure, and seemed somehow to judge Vietnam a just defeat in an unjust war, perhaps an inevitable defeat *because* the war was unjust.

As for the "people"—meaning, presumably, those who opposed American policy in Indochina—Senator McGovern wrote after his visit to North Vietnam in January 1976:

> They remember and appear to honor the work against the war of Americans such as Wayne Morse, Ernest Gruening, Mike Mansfield, Frank Church, William Fulbright, Eugene McCarthy, Robert Kennedy, and myself. Every Vietnamese leader with whom I spoke—including Xuan Thuy, Premier Pham Van Dong, and Madame Binh, was careful to distinguish between the American people and American Presidents, between what they call "Nixon's war" and what they recall as the "peace movement."

And the Vietnamese also patiently explained that the peace agreements which ended the war involved an American commitment of aid to "repair the war damage."

Of course, much depends on one's definition of the "war damage." Were the refugees part of the wreckage and, if so, how might the damage to *them* be repaired? On June 19, 1979, Senator McGovern introduced a "sense of the Senate resolution" whose operative clause called on the President "to call upon the Secretary General of the United Nations to convene immediately an emergency session of the General Assembly, or . . . use other appropriate fora, to deal with the refugee crisis in Southeast Asia." The resolution passed 98-0. Six days later, on June 25, Senator Rudy Boschwitz of Minnesota introduced an amendment to a pending appropriations measure which added $15,575,000, in order to help finance refugee-assistance programs already authorized. Senator Boschwitz's amendment passed 80-22. Senator McGovern (along with Senators Ribicoff, Mathias, Bayh, and Church) was among those who voted "no."*

From others who, in some manner, shape, or form, had made the North Vietnamese victory in Indochina a little easier to achieve there were also responses. The New York *Times* of May 30, 1979, carried a full-page advertisement, in the form of an open letter to the Vietnamese government, signed by Joan Baez. Its opening paragraph is a perfect summation of the expectation that an American defeat in Indochina would have no bad consequenes: "Four years ago, the United States ended its twenty-year presence in Vietnam. An anniversray that should be cause for celebration is, instead, a time for grieving." (Miss Baez had expected an anniversary "celebration"; she would have done better to recall the maxim of Chairman Mao that a revolution is not a tea party.) The letter then goes on to establish the *legitimacy* of those who signed:

> It was an abiding commitment to fundamental principles of human dignity, freedom, and self-determination that motivated so many Americans to oppose the government of South Vietnam and our country's participation in the war. It is that same commitment that compels us to speak out against your brutal disregard of human rights. As in the 60's, we raise our voices now so that your people may live.

The tactics and the rhetoric of this letter and the "moral protest" of the 60's appear similar; the outcome is what is different. The outcome was profound in one case, having helped collapse Saigon; but it was trivial in its effect on Hanoi.

Oppose the government of South Vietnam: could it then be that this was the mistake? Was it not possible "in the 60's" to discern the differing consequences of the mere survival of that govern-

* There is no inconsistency here. On April 30, 1975, the Washington *Post* reported that Senator McGovern had, on the preceding day, told a press conference in Columbus, Ohio: "I am opposed to large numbers of Vietnamese coming, not only because I think it is not in our interests. I don't think it is in their interest. I think the Vietnamese are better off in Vietnam, including the orphans. I was opposed to the airlift. The Vietnamese have a strong tradition of taking care of their children. They honor children in Vietnam, I think they were offended . . . by that airlift" (ellipsis in the original).

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ment of South Vietnam as against the total victory of the government of North Vietnam? What "fundamental principles of human dignity" had ever been in evidence in any totalitarian state, North Vietnam included?

But these questions have been anticipated, and no one seems about to change his mind. In August 1979, Irving Howe and Michael Walzer asked in the *New Republic*: "Were We Wrong about Vietnam?" Their reappraisal wound its way through a half-dozen columns of the magazine, but ended up where it began a dozen years ago: "On the basic issue we firmly believe we were right. We were right in refusing to give credence either to Saigon or Hanoi, in refusing to support the imperial backers of both. There is no reason whatever to change that conviction." And writing in COMMENTARY this past February, Peter L. Berger also finds himself unable to conclude that his opposition to the Vietnam war was "morally wrong." But he at least adds that to say this "is the beginning rather than the end of a process of moral and political reflection." His own reflections yield four conclusions, which are as important to the conduct of the American government as they are to a revaluation of the moral dimension of the "Vietnam era." The third of these is especially apt: "On balance, American power is a force for good in the world." Yet it is this conclusion which somehow eluded the Carter administration when it came to office in 1977 and eludes it still.

THIS phenomenon can be understood in retrospect only by reference to certain political and strategic judgments produced by opposition to the war—whatever one chooses to make of the more complex question of moral responsibility. Morality informs our view of politics and strategy in some final sense, perhaps, but foreign policy seems more the accumulation of small decisions taken in general accordance with a thing called a world view.

However one regards the Vietnam war itself, a world view was indeed derived from it which bears no logical or inherent connection with a critique of the war itself. The most conspicuous and, potentially, the most dangerous element of this view has to do with the question of American power. The anti-war ethos spawned a broad-scale attack on the whole of American power. But what was the inherent connection between opposition to the Vietnam war on the one hand, and support for halving U.S. forces in Europe on the other? What was the necessary relationship between opposition to the Vietnam war and the opposition to U.S. strategic nuclear programs? To naval ship construction? To more air transports? Even to conscription? What caused the New York *Times* to editorialize, in October 1972, that "America's defense budget is exploding, becoming in itself a threat to the security and well being of the nation?"

Nothing can connect these logically unrelated issues, unless it is the *a priori* belief that somehow the Vietnam "disaster" resulted from the mere existence of American power as such. And indeed, this belief is a continuous thread that connects the seemingly disparate and inconsistent parts of the Carter administration's foreign policy—from the President's discussion of "intellectual and moral poverty" in May 1977, to a presumptively "hard-line" speech on national defense in December 1979, with its grotesquely mistaken characterization of our actions in Vietnam as "military intervention in the internal affairs of another country" and the implication that, of course, any new forces would not be used for such ill-advised purposes.

Such a militant misunderstanding of the Vietnam war and the consequences of our defeat there hovers over everything else. When was there a government so determined to think the worst of the military power of its own country, but equally prepared to put the most innocent construction on the armed forces of others? What else explains the doctrine of the administration's first chief SALT negotiator that the build-up of Soviet military forces is but a mere "aping" of a prior American build-up? What else explains the delay, the deferral, the cancellation of various American military programs? What else makes of a militarily trivial response in the face of Soviet aggression—namely, the registration of eighteen-, nineteen-, and twenty-year olds—a heated national issue? Nothing but a certain imagery of the Vietnam experience which some cannot let go of for fear of being forced to admit to a misunderstanding of the facts of that situation, the consequences of defeat, the nature of totalitarian reality.

The administration view of our experience in Vietnam is the single greatest restraint on our capacity to deal with the world, and that capacity will not much increase unless the view behind it is changed, thoroughly and profoundly. For a governing class which believes what ours has chosen to believe about the Vietnam experience cannot have the plain pride in itself which will allow it to function. And what is most ironic is that what it must cease believing are things which are not even true.

IN JUNE 1979, Richard C. Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, followed the path of several predecessors when he came to offer a congressional subcommittee "an appraisal of the current situation in Indochina." The themes were familiar, beginning with the denial that Communism was an important factor in the human misery of the region: "In preparing my remarks on these subjects, I was struck by the role that deep-seated ethnic and historical antagonisms have had in the current situation. In virtually every case, the current conflicts reflect centuries of rivalry and hatred, which Communist 'internationalism' has been un-

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able to put to rest." The thought did not occur that Communist "internationalism" had in fact made things worse, that Communism as such had made things worse than they had ever been before.

Yet as Mr. Holbrooke went on, echoes of an even earlier time were heard, and he began to sound more and more like his predecessors in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations:

> The fighting in Kampuchea has also forced the Royal Thai government to reevalute its military posture and to take steps to upgrade its armed forces. Thailand is accordingly increasing its purchase of military equipment from the United States and other suppliers. . . . In recognition of this situation, as well as in recognition of our long-standing ties by treaty and friendship to Thailand, the President assured Prime Minister Kriangsak during his visit to Washington last February that the United States supports the integrity of Thailand as a stable, secure, and peaceful nation in Southeast Asia.

As Mr. Holbrooke described additional problems, the echoes of the Johnson era grew louder:

> . . . The Soviet military presence in Vietnam has grown rapidly. . . . Use of ports began on April 1. . . . Most recently a Soviet diesel submarine and submarine tender visited Cam Ranh bay. . . . Use of Vietnamese territory and facilities gives the Soviets an increased reconnaissance and intelligence collection capability. . . . This is a source of serious concern to us and to most Asian countries, not only militarily but because of the dangers to the region from increased great-power rivalry and the consequent risk of increasing tensions.

Cam Ranh, it will be remembered, was a major American base in Vietnam. Its future summoned up a note of exasperated disbelief when two members of the staff of Senator Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee visited Vietnam back in December 1969. Their report—co-authored by Richard Moose, then a Fulbright aide, now Assistant Secretary of State for African affairs—sardonically noted in passing, "Incidentally, several American officials expressed the view that a residual force of one division should remain in Vietnam permanently and that the United States needs to retain the Cam Ranh base."

It took Holbrooke, formerly managing editor of *Foreign Policy* magazine, almost twenty pages to get to what is, after all, the main point. He did make it, even as the articles he had once published never quite managed to do. Indeed, it was a restatement of the obvious:

> Vietnam is a country rich in natural resources, with a talented and productive population. If the Vietnamese people were able to turn their energies to developing their economic potential, instead of serving policies that bring instability and warfare to their neighbors and provide a foothold for Soviet military and political penetration of the area, they could begin to share the benefits of the extraordinary growth that now characterizes most of Southeast Asia. We, and I believe all of the countries of the area, would welcome the constructive role that Vietnam can play. No one who wishes the people of Southeast Asia well can have an interest in encouraging its division into hostile camps. The basic choice is up to Hanoi, whose current policies have caused massive human suffering for the peoples of Indochina and serious problems for its non-Communist neighbors.

Thus do the facts pursue us. One is either led by the gods or dragged by them, even to the accompaniment of kicking and thrashing. *The basic choice is up to Hanoi.* . . . Did Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, dragged at last by the facts, expect to be greeted with the scorn and derision which almost always seemed to await, for instance, former Secretary of State Dean Rusk whenever *he*, led to a "premature" perception of the same facts, would say the same thing? (Rusk, years before, had also been Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs in the Truman administration.) It is all there in the records of the Senate testimony of the mid-1960's, Rusk explaining carefully, tediously, unemotionally, that the basic choice was indeed up to Hanoi, laying out what would happen if the United States were defeated in Indochina. The argument went on for a while, and then it ceased. Rusk was no longer to be argued with, merely savaged, then hounded, to be made into an "unperson" of sorts.

Even in 1975, when it seemed to Rusk's tormentors that they had secured the verdict of history, the former Secretary of State—in an idiom that recalled the exchanges of ten years before—still held firm. The New York *Times*, soliciting the reactions of "persons who had played key parts," quoted him on April 30, 1975:

> I'm very saddened by recent developments, but also concerned where the story ends. We haven't seen the final bill yet. The American people around 1968 decided that if we couldn't tell them when the war would end, we might as well chuck it. Part of this decision was to take the consequences, and that is what we are going to have to do now.
>
> I can't avoid my responsibility for what happened in Southeast Asia, but I don't think others, including the peace movement, should either for what happened.

George Ball was not exactly a member of the peace movement, but as an Under Secretary of State in the Johnson administration, he had been a well-known "in-house" opponent of its Indochina policy. Now he sees in the Thai-Vietnamese tensions the possibility of a third world war. Describing what he admitted was a "worst-case scenario," Ball wrote in the Washington *Post* on November 2, 1979:

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> The tangled skein of alliances that touch Vietnam and Thailand and involve all three superpowers might well produce a sequence of events having a momentum of their own, as happened in Europe in 1914. Just as tiny Serbia set off a world conflict, the small, irrational nation of Vietnam could, by an impetuous move, ignite an even greater conflagration.

Ball's anxieties are, of course, wholly reminiscent of the arguments used to justify Indochina policy when he was in office and when he opposed that policy His own rhetoric is surely as apocalyptic—and his analysis at least as accurate—today as the Johnson administration's analysis was then. Consider these excerpts from Ball's column:

> . . . Vietnamese troops are now accumulating. Were those troops to move into Thailand, America would face some excruciating decisions. . . . The Vietnamese are demonstrably expansionist, while Moscow, which supports their aggressions and provides their military supplies, might well encourage them to overrun Thailand. . . . Who can say that such a warrior nation, made arrogant by its defeat of America, will be content to rest at the border? Yet, if the Vietnamese do risk a crossing, how would we respond? . . . We could find ourselves with the choice of either intervening or letting Thailand be overrun. How many Americans would support a new war against Vietnam? Yet, if we did not effectively help Thailand, the other Southeast Asian nations would almost certainly make separate arrangements with Hanoi. If, after withdrawing from Vietnam, we should let another ally go under, Japan would inevitably be forced to reexamine its total dependence on our security commitments . . . and even to acquire nuclear weapons. America would lose its position in the Pacific. . . . China could not . . . tolerate the threat of encirclement. . . Quite likely it [China] would find it more useful to attack Vietnam than to help the Thais. . . . That, in turn, might lead to a Soviet reaction. . . . It [the Soviet Union] might prefer to attack China from the north . . . while, at the same time, encouraging Kim Il Sung to move against South Korea, in the confusion surrounding the assassination of Park Chung Hee. . . .

Though Ball doubted that events would follow "such a bizarre and frightening course," he nonetheless believed that "we must urgently concentrate on heading off the cataclysm. . . . We must move quickly." One imagines that something like this "bizarre and frightening" scenario was presented in rebuttal to Ball by Johnson supporters within the government fifteen years ago—perhaps even by Dean Rusk himself.

For it had been Rusk's experience that totalitarian powers, once started, tended not to stop by themselves. He understood that an American defeat would begin the "unraveling," even if he could not know the details. Even today, one is hard-pressed to sketch the line "on the ground" that connects Saigon to Phnom Penh to Angola to Ethiopia to Aden to Teheran to Managua to Kabul, perhaps to something worse. Nor is it easy to trace the course of a corresponding worldwide totalitarian offensive in the realm of ideas, similarly made more intense in the post-Vietnam period. But where would one begin, other than on the roof of the American embassy in Saigon, when the last American helicopter with its bewildered human cargo departed on April 30, 1975?

Obviously, the impulse to begin there will be resisted at every turn. There is too much invested in the history of the past decade and a half to expect otherwise. Beginning there will require something akin to a cultural revolution, a New Past, as the "radical" historians used to put it. Nonetheless, it will be a fit test of the spirit and character of our country. And if we fail at it, we will surely fail at other things as well.

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In Defense of Camp David

Alan Dowty

THE Carter administration's Middle East policy began in the shadows of a report by the Brookings Institution which declared that "peace-making efforts should henceforth concentrate on negotiation of a comprehensive settlement." Most of 1977 was spent in a futile effort to reconvene the Geneva conference, culminating in a joint U.S.-Soviet statement of October 1. At that point, Anwar Sadat, able to recognize stalemate even if Washington could not, saved U.S. diplomacy "in spite of itself" by interposing his own dramatic peace initiative. Sadat's trip to Jerusalem caught Washington flat-footed; the administration could hardly avoid the conclusion that it must be a good thing, but Carter quickly confirmed that it would not deflect him from his pursuit of the Holy Grail:

> We . . . have taken the position . . . that a separate peace agreement between Egypt and Israel is not desirable. This is predicated upon the very viable hope that a comprehensive settlement can be reached among all the parties involved.

Thus, when Egypt and Israel began bilateral negotiations, Secretary of State Vance insisted that such meetings should only "pave the way toward an ultimate Geneva conference." And throughout the first half of 1978 the United States supported enlargement of the agenda to include more divisive issues.

By the time of the Egypt-Israel meeting in Leeds, England, in July 1978, insistence upon a "package deal" had again paralyzed negotiations by linking soluble issues to the most intractable aspects of the entire Arab-Israel complex. At this point the U.S., badly in need of results rather than the preservation of doctrinal purity, convened the Camp David meeting and set its sights on what could be achieved rather than what defied solution. The result, to be sure, falls far short of a framework for a comprehensive peace; consider the vagueness of the general framework as opposed to the precision of the Egypt-Israel document. But that is exactly what made the Camp David accords possible—namely, a recognition of the value of agreements with only some of the parties and on only some of the issues.

By this time, two years of its own experience, reinforced by the lessons of the Kissinger period, might have led the Carter administration to a clearer recognition of the requirements for diplomatic progress on Arab-Israel issues. Progress had been achieved when issues were separated rather than linked, when negotiations were pursued bilaterally rather than *en masse*, when uncooperative parties were excluded rather than courted, when diplomacy was conducted privately rather than through the media, when the United States served as honest broker rather than trying to impose its own conceptions—and when the overall aim was conceived as a *process* of building peace gradually rather than as the achievement of an all-encompassing one-time solution. Instead, U.S. diplomacy after Camp David returned to its comfortable habits, diverted only temporarily by a spasm of realism when the Egypt-Israel peace treaty was at stake. Consider the following activity in the wake of Camp David:

- Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders reassures Jordanians and West Bank Arabs that the United States envisions total Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, including settlements, in any future peace agreement.
- The U.S. Consul in Jerusalem and members of his staff engage in high-profile consultations with West Bank Arabs, including PLO supporters.
- The Carter administration wages a valiant fight for its full $90-million aid request for Syria —immediately after that country has rejected the Camp David framework in vitriolic terms.
- Following the earlier sale of F-15's to Saudi Arabia (justified as a reward for moderation) the administration meets Saudi opposition to Camp David by approving another $5.1 billion in arms sales during fiscal 1979. In addition, rejectionist Libya is allowed to buy militarily useful 727's and 747's, and Jordan's Hussein is allotted 300 M-60 tanks. In December 1979, there is a further sale to Saudi Arabia of some 6,500 advanced missiles and bombs, including 916 Maverick missiles and 660 Sidewinder missiles.

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• After Camp David and during the Egypt-Israel peace talks, U.S. negotiators press for closer "linkage" to a general settlement, forcing Sadat to demand no less. When Israel rejects an American proposal that would essentially make the Egypt-Israel peace treaty conditional on progress elsewhere, Carter angrily and publicly blames Israel for the impasse.

• When the Egyptian-Israeli treaty is finally signed, the United States immediately makes a number of gestures toward those whose exclusion had made the achievement possible. Carter publicly restates his previously-rejected offer to open contact with the PLO if it accepts UN Security Council Resolution 242, stressing that he would "immediately start working directly" with that organization in such a case. Shafiq al-Hout, director of the PLO office in Beirut, is given a visa for a U.S. speaking tour, even though U.S. law forbids the admission of officials of groups that espouse terrorism.

• The State Department's annual review of Middle East policy, presented by Assistant Secretary Saunders in July 1979, stresses the need to accommodate rejectionist states and argues that "negative reaction in the Arab world has demonstrated the validity of our premise that there must be a comprehensive peace that achieves acceptance of Israel by all of its neighbors and an honorable and secure peace between Israel and the Palestinian people."

• In the West Bank autonomy talks, the United States suddenly proposes discussion of legislative powers for the elected authority, voting rights and repatriation of Palestinian Arabs living outside the West Bank, and inclusion of East Jerusalem representatives—thereby going well beyond what even Egypt had proposed for the immediate agenda.

• Similarly, U.S. special envoy Robert Strauss proposes that the issue of Jerusalem, which the Camp David framework wisely defers to a later stage, be given top priority in negotiations.

• The U.S. pledge of no recognition of and no negotiation with the PLO is increasingly stretched in practice, especially with the growing frequency of "social encounters." A U.S. ambassador who clearly violates the pledge (Andrew Young) resigns his post, but the impression is created that his real sin is not so much the fact of a "non-social" meeting with a PLO official as his misrepresentation of that meeting. The President allows six weeks to pass before denying publicly that "Jewish pressure" led to the envoy's resignation, and there are indications that State Department officials knew of the meeting and did not disapprove so long as it was not public knowledge.

• Finally, the United States tries to float a Security Council resolution that would "complement" Resolution 242 and entice the PLO to accept the 242 framework, thus making possible official U.S.-PLO ties. The effort is dropped only after protests from *both* Egypt and Israel that it undermines the autonomy talks.

WHAT explains the persistence of this "fundamentalism" in the Carter administration, this dogged devotion to total salvation rather than limited but practical achievements?

In the first place, it is consonant with a traditional American style in foreign affairs; regarding conflict among nations as an aberration, Americans have tended to seek total solutions and to posit utopian goals. Carter, as a born-again Wilsonian, is nothing if not representative of this spirit. In this he is reinforced by the future-oriented globalism of his National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has described the Arab-Israel conflict—and even U.S.-Soviet rivalry—as anachronistic phenomena that need to be resolved so that mankind can address the problems of the "technetronic age." In addition, the advice of Arabists within the administration has long been loudly in favor of a comprehensive approach, since these advisers tend inevitably to be responsive to Arab thinking (and Arabs stress a "comprehensive" peace because the phrase is used to affirm that the "basic" problem of the Palestinians must be dealt with). Needless to say, the influence of the foreign-policy bureaucracy is strong when presidential leadership is weak or lacks a clear direction of its own. Thus the unanimous recommendations of Middle East advisers have tended to prevail under normal circumstances, and only in brief periods of close presidential involvement (Camp David, the treaty shuttle) has Carter overcome both bureaucratic inertia and his own natural inclination.

Another crucial element in the administration's outlook is the link to energy and to U.S.-Saudi relations. Administration officials accept at face value the Saudi insistence that oil supply and pricing are tied to the Arab-Israel conflict. Treatment of the nation's energy problems is thus dependent on prior resolution of the "Palestinian problem" on terms acceptable to Saudi Arabia. The administration's sensitivity to the views of Riyadh is nothing short of remarkable; as Senator Church has said, "We have had our neck in the OPEC noose since 1973, and thus we tend to catch cold when the Saudis sneeze."

The final link in the chain of logic is the tendency—promoted again by those most sensitized to current dogmas in the area—to regard Palestinians and the PLO as practically synonymous. The resolution of the Palestinian question is seen as the key to stability in the Middle East, and the PLO is seen as the key to the Palestinian issue. Thus there can be no serious movement toward a Middle East settlement without PLO participation. In tacitly acting on these assumptions, the administration accepts at face value the *public* statements of Arab states, seeing in them a sincer-

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ity not often matched in practice by even the most vocal sponsors of Arafat and company.

In such a frame of mind, the Camp David accords and the Egypt-Israel peace treaty indeed appear as dubious achievements.

THE strengths of the Camp David framework, which are considerable, are not readily apparent when the focus is on ultimate goals. Camp David needs to be seen as part of a process in which the immediate concrete terms may be less important than the fact of the process itself. It needs to be set in the perspective of current and future trends in the area; while it demonstrates that what was unimaginable only a few years ago is now possible, it also shows clearly what is still unimaginable (but may, with patience, also become possible in the future). As documents marking a point of passage in the evolution of the conflict, Camp David and the Egypt-Israel treaty are obviously "inadequate" as a final destination, but this does not impair their significance. To quote Meg Greenfield, "Viewed as exercises in process, these documents do take on a peculiar virtue and importance way out of proportion to their actual ability to make some things happen and guarantee that others never do."

One significant change marked by Camp David, and a peculiar strength of the peace-making process it represents, is the altered perception of interests and tactics among immediate parties. In the Egyptian view, the new state of relations with Israel is itself an improved means of gaining Israeli concessions on long-range issues. In the words of Butros Ghali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs:

> I believe that now that there is peace Egypt will have more leverage than before. . . . I will have power over, leverage over, Israel according to this normalization of relations. . . . The Israelis are interested in moving from peace-keeping to peace-building. So they want to build peace. My leverage is that it will be impossible to build the peace unless we find a solution to the Palestinian problems.

The Egyptian use of normalization as leverage on Israel might be seen as a weakness in Camp David, as an indication that commitments to the agreements are conditional. But a better reading would be that the Egyptian commitment is not based on wishful thinking or on the arbitrary whims of one man, but rather on the calculation that relations with Israel serve Egypt's tactical interest. This is a more solid foundation than good will alone. And whether the Egyptians are right or wrong at the moment, an important watershed has been passed when a major Arab belligerent argues publicly that normalization of relations with Israel, rather than non-recognition, is a more effective means of achieving Arab goals—including the resolution of the Palestinian question.

The Egyptians obviously have a high stake in showing that they, and not their Arab critics, are correct. They have resisted procedures that would have undermined the Camp David process. They have muted their public reactions to Israeli moves that they deeply oppose, and have cooperated to head off serious crises. They have refrained from raising or stressing difficult issues that could be postponed. Had the Carter administration followed the same wise principle, the path of negotiations would have run considerably more smoothly.

The Egyptian tactical interest in Camp David is, of course, an outgrowth of the more general Egyptian interest in peace, an interest derived from the futility and costs of war, enormous economic pressures, a returning sense of Egyptian particularism, and reactions to new radical threats in the area. In many cases these Egyptian concerns are shared by Israel, so that Camp David is shored up by bilateral interests that go beyond Arab-Israel issues. Though this shared approach has only begun to find expression, it is one of the more striking aspects of the Camp David framework and should be included—though it seldom is—in any discussion of Camp David's strengths and weaknesses.

The fact that Egypt and Israel worked out their own arrangements for joint peace-keeping operations in Sinai, with minimal U.S. help, is one indication of cooperative action going beyond treaty terms. The image of the Egyptian Minister of Defense being escorted into the inner sanctum of the Israeli Defense Ministry is yet more vivid. There have been references to "common strategic understandings" reached by Israeli and Egyptian leaders at the Alexandria meeting in July of last year, which was described by Menachem Begin as the most important meeting in two years of Egypt-Israel talks. Foremost among such understandings were, presumably, opposition to Soviet moves throughout the area, concern about the spread of Khomeini-style unrest, agreement on Lebanon (Syria should get out), and reaction to events on the Arabian peninsula. It should be stressed that the leaders of the two countries were speaking and acting not on behalf of U.S. or Western interests, though they perceived their interests similarly, but rather on behalf of *their own* common strategic interests—a much more solid base upon which to build.

Aside from these broader issues, Camp David has already served immediate Egyptian interests very well. Sadat, alone of all Arab leaders, has achieved the commitment of total Israeli withdrawal from all of his country's occupied lands. In doing so, he has established the precedent of total Israeli withdrawal despite the vows of four Israeli governments that Israel would never surrender control over the Straits of Tiran (and Begin's right-wing critics are perfectly correct in stressing just how important this precedent may turn out to be). Furthermore, Sadat can argue that, whatever its defects from the Arab point of view, the Camp David framework embodies for the first time ex-

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plicit Israeli recognition that the future of the West Bank will not be determined by Israel, but by international negotiation.

THE advocates of comprehensiveness will perhaps concede that the agreements serve Egyptian interests, but argue that Egypt cannot afford to ignore broader Arab interests. The isolation of Egypt in the Arab world seems to them insupportable in the long run. Of course it is not at all obvious why an Egyptian policy serving Egyptian interests should be so problematic. But let us answer the practical question: given the demonstrated hostility of other Arab states, can Egypt continue for long in "isolation"?

The strengths of Egypt's position should not be overlooked. By virtue of location, demography, and cultural preeminence, Egypt is the natural center of gravity in the Arab world. It is not easy to "isolate" a nation that represents nearly half of all Arabs (in fact, Egypt and two relatively friendly regimes—Sudan and Morocco—together comprise well over two-thirds of the Arab world). Without Egypt, the rest of the Arab world is weak and divided; Egypt's Arab opponents are well aware of this weakness and deeply frustrated by it —hence the violence of their response.

Egypt clearly has little to fear from external threats. It is shielded to the east by Israel, while the Sudanese regime to the south is friendly. As for Libya, Qaddafi has more to fear from Egypt than vice versa. Economic sanctions are ineffective; only a small part of Egypt's trade has been with other Arab countries, and Egypt's balance of payments has actually improved with the help of Western aid, remittances from Egyptians abroad, and increased revenues from oil and the canal.

Only internal upheaval (possibly promoted from without) is likely to divert Egypt from the course it has chosen. Yet neither Sadat's visit to Jerusalem nor the signing of the peace treaty occasioned significant shows of opposition—in fact, the only mass demonstrations have been in support of Sadat. Even critics have lately admitted that Sadat "apparently" has the support of his public. To be sure, open opposition is not encouraged in Egypt, and in any event opponents might not want to upset the planned Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. But behind this is a change of attitudes in Egypt that has been noted by every close observer over the last decade: a decline in Nasserist pan-Arabism, and a growing assertion of *Egyptian* interests. In this climate, the hostility of other Arab states arouses in Egypt not trepidation, but defiance. At the same time, far from being a withdrawal from Arab affairs, Sadat's initiatives can be seen as a bold and domestically popular reassertion of Egypt's "rightful" role in the area. As stated by Patrick Seale:

> A likely hypothesis is that the treaty is Egypt's rebellion against the mendicant status forced upon it by the surge of revenues enjoyed by the oil producers since 1973-74. . . . Resentment of "rich Arabs," a sentiment felt at many levels of Egyptian society, bred a determination in the leadership at least to rectify this unnatural state of affairs. Sadat's bold peace-making, his cavalier treatment of his former allies, his outrage when Saudi Arabia and Kuwait forsook him after Camp David, all suggest that he is making a bid to regain that Arab predominance which Egyptians feel is theirs by right. As Sadat has said, there can be no war without Egypt and there can be no peace without Egypt. The trips to Jerusalem, to Camp David, and then to Washington to sign the treaty are so many "lessons" which his Arab critics have to learn and in their turn recite. This is not isolationism, but the will to reassert leadership.

It seems unlikely that Egypt will in fact remain "isolated" for very long. Splits among other Arab countries and domestic instability elsewhere (Syria, Iraq) will inevitably create points of entry for Egyptian diplomacy. Already, Morocco is quietly accepting Egyptian aid in its Saharan war. Saudis, whatever they say publicly, do not want an unstable Egypt; the Saudi tycoon Adnan Khashoggi is even now helping to finance a new telephone system for Cairo. From Tunis, the New York *Times* reports that at the "relocated" Arab League headquarters, the feeling is that the move "is temporary and that a way will eventually be found to move back to Cairo."

But even if formal isolation should continue for a while, Egypt's position is viable. Butros Ghali has announced that when an autonomy plan is concluded, Egypt will consider its responsibilities on the Palestinian question fulfilled. At that point the Palestinians will have to speak on their own behalf. If they still refuse to participate, the Egypt-Israel treaty can and will stand on its own (and should Egyptians be tempted to renege once Israeli withdrawal is complete, a demilitarized Sinai, open to quick Israeli reoccupation, would serve as hostage for future good behavior).

AS A peace strategy, therefore, the Camp David framework has quite substantial strengths, and in fact U.S. policy does not so much negate them (at least intentionally) as it tries to incorporate them into something broader. Camp David is explicitly envisioned as the first chapter of a comprehensive settlement, and any conflict between the short-term requirements of effective diplomacy and the long-term vision of a peace accepted by all parties is deliberately minimized. Of course reality is not so simple: it is not possible at one and the same time to give full support to the Camp David process and full satisfaction to the Saudis and others with their own particular conception of comprehensive peace. Choices and trade-offs are inevitable; the best peace strategy is not the most effective strat-

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egy for winning Saudi applause, at least in the short run.

In making such choices, the practical dictates of successful peace-making should have priority over any other concern, both because peace *is* more important and because real progress is the best guarantee for achieving other goals *in the long run*. Pursuing the good will of the Saudis and other "moderate" Arabs on their terms, by contrast, will undercut the peace process, for the simple reason that the Saudi conception of a comprehensive settlement is unworkable.

The general unworkability of a comprehensive settlement under present circumstances should need little elaboration. In fact, the burden of proof should be on those who insist, in the face of contrary evidence, that a total settlement *is* feasible. The basic position of the PLO (which in Arab eyes defines Palestinian rights) and that of Israel are so far apart that any settlement would have to be imposed forcibly on one or the other or both. Comprehensiveness prevents any narrowing of this gap by tying the entire process to the most insoluble issues, the most intractable party, and the most unworkable diplomatic procedures. Continued faith in the possibility of a sudden resolution of this deeply-rooted conflict is testimony to the persistence of human optimism, but says something far less positive about one's grasp of historic realities.

It is important to realize how the Saudis, who are not especially known for empty utopianism, expect this process to work. The comprehensive settlement which they project is hardly a compromise, but satisfies all outstanding Arab demands aside from the destruction of Israel itself. Such a settlement would *still* not satisfy the PLO—let alone the rejection front—but would obviously have to be imposed on Israel. In the Saudi scenario, the United States would in fact impose these terms on Israel, which, given its dependence on American support, would have to submit. In other words, for the Saudis (and Jordanians, moderate Palestinians, etc.), a comprehensive settlement is a euphemism for an American-forced total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories (and possibly includes the "repatriation" of Palestinians).

Aside from the Saudi connection, there is no reason to think that such a course of action is any more in American interests now than at any time since the 1967 war. But even if the idea seemed good in theory, it would not work in the real world. For the United States to impose on Israel a settlement so detrimental to what Israelis see as their most vital interests would require more than just leverage; it would require complete control of Israeli politics and society. Advocates of an imposed peace (like George Ball) misread the bargaining situation between patron and client. It is not a one-way street, and especially not on a matter the client considers basic to survival, but which for the patron is only one of a spectrum of concerns around the globe. The perceived importance of the issue, the degree of determination, and the willingness to pay costs in order to prevail will all be substantially greater for the client. And when the risk of submitting to the pressure seems greater than the risk of going without superpower support (the principal "lever"), the patron's ability to dictate is very slight. But does anyone really expect an American President to push to that point?

Advocates of an imposed peace cite as a model Eisenhower's imposition of withdrawal on Israel in 1957. But it is precisely this experience that fortifies Israeli resistance; the 1957 withdrawal did not contribute to Middle East stability, but solidified Nasserism in the region and prepared the way for a war fought under more adverse conditions ten years later. U.S.-Israel confrontations—in 1957, 1969-70, 1975, and to some extent in 1977—have never produced progress in Arab-Israel diplomacy. Israeli concessions have been forthcoming, on the other hand, when confidence in the peace process and in the United States was strengthened. Sadat's initiative led to a total revision of Israeli attitudes on Sinai and the Straits of Tiran, after years of American pressure had added nothing. Sadat, though still entertaining an exaggerated notion of American leverage on Israel, has come to appreciate these complexities more fully and now pays closer attention to the dynamics of attitude change in Israel. Unfortunately, the other Arab states cling to the scenario of an American-imposed settlement that will "deliver" Israel with little or no need for concessions on their part.

RATHER than feed these illusions, the United States would do better to combat them. There is a difference in kind between a peace of mutual accommodation, in whch American influence is used to strengthen the confidence of both sides, and a dictated "settlement" in which basically unacceptable terms are unilaterally imposed on one side. The United States is committed to the first kind of peace, but words and actions that seem to denigrate partial achievements help to keep alive a belief in the imposed-peace scenario. The expectation that the United States can and will force Israel to accept Arab demands, outside the framework of mutual compromise and adjustment, is a chimera; the Saudis need to understand this.

In any case, the Arab-Israel conflict is hardly the only or even the main issue in Saudi relations with the United States. As such Arab observers as Abeed Dawisha have pointed out, the Saudis are concerned first of all with security and stability in the face of a number of internal and external threats: rising radicalism in the area, Soviet penetration, the unsettling effects of rapid development, encirclement by hostile regimes, and so

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forth. The recent clear manifestations of internal instability underline the basic weakness of a feudal regime seeking to hoard a significant part of mankind's mineral wealth in the heart of one of the world's more volatile regions. As Dawisha notes, it is vital for Saudi Arabia to be perceived as an active participant in the "struggle against Zionism" in order to avoid involvement in quarrels that could expose its basic weakness. Cooperation with the United States is also an essential element in the Saudi reading of its own security interests; attitudes to the United States will be determined largely on this basis and not in response to the American position on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Nor is the link to oil pricing and supply as direct as John Connally and George Ball proclaim. A recent Senate Foreign Relations Committee study confirms what should be obvious to any serious analyst of post-1973 oil marketing: OPEC prices, and decisions on production levels by particular countries, are determined by economic criteria and not by political motives. The same can be said of decisions on the disposition of surplus revenues; they are invested for maximum profit and not for political effect. The Western position on oil price and supply would not be improved by one iota if the Arab-Israel conflict were to be magically resolved tomorrow. The problem of politically-inspired selective embargos is somewhat different, but as the Iranian case shows, not even this is a function of the Arab-Israel conflict alone. So long as the West is vulnerable to oil cut-offs, any source of instability in the Middle East is a potential threat. The solution must involve more than the elimination of one source of instability; it must attack the fact of dependence itself.

In light of these considerations, there is even less justification for the United States being deflected from what is clearly the only workable peace strategy. American ambivalence not only reflects an oversensitivity to public declarations by Arab states that ought not to be taken at face value, but also tends to undercut the chances of real diplomatic progress that would in the end win Saudi and other moderate Arab support—assuming the "moderates" genuinely believe that stabilization of the Arab-Israel conflict will reduce radical and Soviet influence in the area. Hints of U.S. backing for a comprehensive imposed peace can only be pernicious to the negotiating process, since they encourage Arab opponents of negotiation and discourage moderation among both Arabs and Israelis.

A CASE in point is U.S. Palestinian policy; the constant flirtation with the PLO has worked against moderating trends among Palestinians.

The PLO, whatever its leaders may privately hint about future changes of heart, is at present totally opposed to the negotiating process and the framework to which the United States is presumably committed. In positing as its goal a Palestinian state in place of, and not alongside, Israel, the PLO platform is a minority position among Arabs and probably even among Palestinians, despite their widespread verbal support for the PLO. On the other hand, there is little doubt that the PLO faithfully and authentically reflects the views of many Palestinians among the 1948 refugees, who in fact comprise its historic base of support and who are not entranced with the idea of a state confined to the West Bank. This, of course, does not prevent innumerable outside observers, with as much persistence as illogic, from urging a PLO-led state on the West Bank as an ultimate solution to the conflict.

Take, for example, George Ball in one of his more recent fulminations (*Worldview*, December 1979):

> [We must] direct our diplomatic efforts at trying, in a realistic way, to deal with these recalcitrant and complex issues that lie at the center of the Arab-Israeli problem. . . . That means, in the first instance, being prepared not only to talk directly with the PLO but to say to them that the United States will support an arrangement providing self-determination to the peoples of the occupied areas, provided they in return are prepared, as a part of the final arrangement, to recognize the legitimate rights of the people of Israel to territorial integrity within the pre-1967 borders, subject to such minor rectifications as may be negotiated, and are prepared to agree to necessary measures of restraint to reinforce Israeli security. . . . Only when we frankly offer support for self-determination can we hope to gain the support of other Arab states in the area that have themselves accepted Resolution 242; only then can we expect the peoples now living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to respond in a manner that will enable the more moderate leaders of the PLO to agree to participate in a serious diplomatic effort.

Obviously Ball believes that self-determination in the occupied territories is sufficient to engage the PLO—or at least its "more moderate leaders"—in a final resolution of the conflict. He assumes that an Israel "within the pre-1967 borders" will pose no residual problems in a comprehensive settlement based on the formula of withdrawal in exchange for peace and recognition. This ahistorical tendency to treat the conflict as rooted in the events of 1967 is confirmed in Ball's comments on terrorism: "If one cannot condone terrorism, one can at least identify its roots, and historically terrorism has been a psychotic response to a military occupation." As though there were no terrorism used against Israel before 1967!

The idea of a West Bank Palestinian state or autonomous entity as centerpiece of an Arab-Israel settlement has tremendous and apparently unshakable appeal to some minds. It seems to tie up all the loose ends: the future of the occupied territories, a negotiating partner for Israel, a role for the

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PLO. And there is indeed compelling logic behind the idea of dividing the area into self-governing Jewish and Arab states; after all, that was the basis of the 1947 UN partition plan. But the idea was rejected then by Palestinian Arabs on grounds that it was unjust and involved "grave practical difficulties . . . commerce would be strangled, communications dislocated, and the public finances upset."

Now, apparently, there are at least some Arabs willing to contemplate a Palestinian Arab state in *part* of Palestine as the key to resolving the conflict. And George Ball is not the only observer to seize on this idea as a means of escaping basic contradictions in the positions of the two sides. The Carter administration, from its original espousal of a "Palestinian homeland" in 1977 to its insistent pressures in the current autonomy talks, obviously believes that the Palestinian problem can be solved—to the satisfaction of enough parties to make it stick—with a program centering on the West Bank and Gaza.

There is, however, one small defect in this vision: the solution is irrelevant to the problem it is designed to solve.

The PLO did not originate in the 1967 war. It was founded by and still essentially represents the interests of the 1948 refugees from what is now Israel. Refugees from Acre, Jaffa, or Haifa are not interested in "returning" to Nablus or Hebron; had they wanted to resettle on the West Bank, they could have done so at any time between 1948 and 1967. But refugees in the West Bank area remain registered as refugees. The persistence of outside observers in trying to link the PLO and the West Bank illustrates the marvelous imperviousness of the human mind to facts and evidence that contradict comfortable notions (or, as a psychologist might put it, the avoidance of cognitive dissonance). The PLO cannot be blamed for this confusion, for its own statements and internal debates have been admirably clear on the topic. Over the disclaimers of their well-wishers in the West, PLO leaders have consistently confirmed the obvious implication of their basic goals: they do not regard a West Bank state, let alone West Bank autonomy (no matter how complete), as satisfaction of their grievances.

In 1974, at the 12th session of the Palestine National Council, the PLO position on the liberation of the West Bank was debated at length and solemnly pronounced. It was decided that the PLO would agree to establish an "independent and fighting authority" on the West Bank if and when Israeli withdrawal there could be effectuated. Some factions opposed this on the grounds that even a "temporary" West Bank state would divert energy and attention from the basic struggle to liberate the rest of Palestine. The majority position, however, accepted the idea of a West Bank state as an interim step in the achievement of the final goal, it being understood that such acceptance did not imply any change of attitude toward other occupied areas (i.e., what the rest of the world recognizes as Israel within its pre-1967 lines):

> The PLO will struggle against any plan for the establishment of a Palestinian entity the price of which is recognition, conciliation, secure borders, renunciation of the national right, and our people's deprivation of their right to return and their right to determine their fate on their national soil.

In March 1977, the 13th National Council substituted the word "state" for the word "authority," but otherwise made no substantive changes. As Farouk al Kadoumi, the PLO "Foreign Minister," carefully explained:

> We accept at this stage that we have this state on only part of our territory. But this doesn't mean that we are giving up the rest of our rights. . . . There are two [initial] phases to our return. The first phase to the 1967 lines, and the second to the 1948 lines . . . the third stage is the democratic state of Palestine.

In August 1977, there was a serious American effort to get the PLO to accept UN Resolution 242, which at least implies recognition of Israel, in order to draw Arafat into the negotiating process and meet the requirements for initiation of U.S.-PLO diplomatic contact. President Carter, basing himself on apparently sincere Saudi and Egyptian assurances, conjectured optimistically that "Palestinian leaders have indicated indirectly that they might adopt Resolution 242," and offered publicly to begin U.S.-PLO talks if they would do so. But within hours a PLO spokesman had disclaimed any intention of accepting 242 unless it were fundamentally rewritten, thus leaving Carter in a somewhat exposed position and embarrassing the Saudis and Egyptians.

Just recently, as noted earlier, the administration floated the idea of another Security Council Resolution "complementing" 242, despite a lack of indication that it would have any greater success in attracting the PLO to a peace negotiation based on coexistence with Israel; this effort was abandoned after protests from both Israel *and* Egypt that it undercut the autonomy talks by discouraging the cooperation of Palestinians who would accept that basic framework of the Camp David accords.

The PLO position has been reiterated so often, and so recently, that refuting the tiresome wishful thinking of the George Balls becomes in itself tiresome. For example, the recent statement by the PLO representative in Saudi Arabia (a "moderate" in PLO politics): "Every entity set up in a part of Palestine will be a starting point for the liberation of the rest of the territories of Palestine" (*Al Riyadh*, November 13, 1979). From

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time to time a visiting journalist or politician, convinced that he alone has been privy to the innermost thoughts in PLO circles, emerges from a tête-à-tête with Arafat and declares that the PLO is ready to recognize Israel. Usually PLO leaders repudiate such self-appointed spokesmen at once; Arafat could not long maintain his position or the organization were he to try to redefine its *raison d'être* by personal fiat. And why should greater trust be put in private assurances that PLO leaders do not dare make public, than on solemn statements of policy that have been painstakingly debated and negotiated within the organization over the years? In any event, until changes in the PLO position are made public, they can hardly serve as a basis for negotiations.*

EVEN if PLO leaders were to accept the idea, a West Bank state would not solve the problems of the 1948 refugees. The West Bank is about a quarter the size of Massachusetts, and much of it is barren. Generally it has been an exporter rather than an importer of people; the "Palestinizing" of Jordan before 1967, with a steady population flow to the East Bank, was in large part an expression of the population pressure and lack of economic opportunity on the West Bank. The West Bank population now is about 700,000, while there are more than 1.5 million registered refugees outside the West Bank. In no conceivable way could more than a fraction of them be accommodated on the West Bank itself.

This does not exhaust the practical problems of a PLO-led state in such close proximity to Israel. Even if the will to suppress terrorism were present, the divisions and internal dynamics of the PLO would make control of provocations next to impossible. Conventional security issues have been stressed at length by military analysts. Modern military technology, far from reducing the significance of the West Bank for Israel, increases that significance; for example, modern surface-to-air missiles from West Bank territory could effectively block all Israeli airfields. Critics point out that Israel survived a hostile government on the West Bank before 1967, but there is no comparison between the military capabilities of pre-1967 Jordan and the potential of a Soviet-equipped and Soviet-trained military establishment in the 1980's—stationed in an area commanding the strip of territory with three-quarters of Israel's population. Nor, given the distances, would demilitarization solve the problem; a hostile army, if allowed free movement on the West Bank, could cross the Jordan and reach the Mediterranean before Israel could mobilize. Thus any Israeli government must be extremely sensitive to the nature of any regime or leadership in an autonomous or independent West Bank, and certainly would never, so long as it was in touch with reality, relinquish control to any group associated with the PLO's current aims and tactics.

There is, of course, the notion that being given a state to run would domesticate and moderate the PLO leadership. The evidence for this pious assertion is elusive. The weight of recent evidence—Iran, Vietnam, Libya, South Yemen, Cuba, Uganda—would indicate that radical leaders are seldom absorbed by domestic problems but in fact prefer to rally their countries against foreign "enemies" as such problems mount.

And why should West Bank residents have PLO rule, dominated by refugees not from the West Bank, imposed upon them? In what way is this any more just than the rule of Nationalist Chinese refugees over native Taiwanese? Of course, at the present time West Bank leaders proclaim their support of the PLO, as a means of showing their opposition to Israel and acting in conformity with the prevailing Arab mood. But one can be skeptical about the extent to which they would actually welcome rule by Yasir Arafat; their interests, their outlook, and their own personal and communal aspirations all point the other way. As a non-displaced, non-refugee population, they have repeatedly indicated their acceptance of permanent coexistence with Israel. Even the emergence of a new, assertive, presumably pro-PLO leadership in the mayoral elections of 1976 may in the end undermine the PLO's position, since it is much more difficult for the PLO to discredit such leadership, while the mayors are emerging as an authentically indigenous power center, to the unhappiness of the PLO.

Most Palestinians are not refugees, and most already reside in the Palestinian "homeland" in its broader definition (including the East Bank). The non-refugee population of the West Bank takes in some 15-20 per cent of all Palestinians, and is one of four major Palestinian constituencies. The others are West Bank residents who have moved (voluntarily) to the East Bank, the original East Bank population, and the 1948 refugees (living mainly in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Arab oil-producing states). Applying the rule of self-determination, West Bank residents should have a great deal to say about the future of the West Bank, while the PLO has no clear mandate to participate in such discussions. The autonomy talks in the Camp David framework are based on this assumption, and rightfully assign the key negotiating role to an elected local authority. Furthermore, once the PLO is excluded, the definition of the remaining issues becomes clearer and the chances for success more substantial.

* The January 1980 issue of the pro-Arab journal *The Middle East* surveyed Palestinian leaders on the question of whether the Palestinian National Charter, which calls for armed struggle until the liberation of all of Palestine, should be changed. Eleven PLO officials and Palestinian intellectuals associated with the PLO (but no West Bank or Jordan residents) were interviewed, covering the full spectrum of opinion among expatriate Palestinians, the PLO's basic constituency. All eleven opposed any changes in the Charter.

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ONCE we assume mutual acceptance and the end of Israeli control of Arab-inhabited areas, discussion of the future of the West bank becomes a matter of defining autonomy or independence both with regard to Israel and with regard to Jordan. With regard to Israel, it is obvious that even the Likud does not want to perpetuate direct control of a large Arab population. To be sure, the present Israeli government has proposed a severely restricted operational definition of autonomy, and there remains the emotional issue of Jewish settlement, but one can expect further concessions toward meaningful autonomy as bargaining continues (especially if Labor, as expected, wins the next Israeli election). In addition, the Israeli position on autonomy is very sensitive to the evolution of West Bank leadership; a genuinely autonomous leadership, free of PLO domination, would win more Israeli concessions on autonomy.

The growth of Israeli willingness to contemplate genuine local autonomy is reflected in the recent statements of Moshe Dayan, who has urged an end to Israeli military government and the *unilateral* extension of home rule, even in advance of and without reference to the Egypt-Israel autonomy talks. Dayan, long considered almost an annexationist on West Bank issues, now argues that the Israeli presence there should be limited to security-related matters: preventing the entrance of Arafat, the establishment of terrorist bases, etc. As for the reluctance of local officials to cooperate, he points out that elected officials already exist and that it is unlikely they would refuse to wield additional powers that were unilaterally and unconditionally extended to them.

As for autonomy vis-à-vis Jordan, when stripped of the PLO connection this is simply the issue of the future linkage between West and East Banks. In this more limited context, and despite the eclipse of Jordan's role in recent years, there is still a strong case for close linkage. In the first place, closer ties to Jordan make it possible for Israel to contemplate a reduction of its own role; in other words, less autonomy from Jordan makes possible more autonomy from Israel. But, more substantively, the West and East Banks are driven together by objective facts. By any test of geography, history, demography, linguistics, culture, or sociology, East and West Banks belong together. Both were a part of the original British mandate of Palestine. Even by the narrow definition of "Palestine" as only that territory west of the Jordan River, half of Jordan's population is of Palestinian origin. In its basic documents the PLO refers to Jordanians and Palestinians as "one people," and has called for a government in Amman "that will cohere with the Palestine entity." These ties are reinforced by economic complementarity and demographic realities (with the movement across the Jordan, there is hardly a family that is not split between the two banks). Geographically, the West Bank's only Arab border is with Jordan.

Given the PLO tide of the last few years, Jordanian officials have been very coy about reunification. But they do, nevertheless, make every effort to maintain their influence on the West Bank. Salaries are still paid to West Bank officials, municipal budgets are still underwritten, and maps including the West Bank are still issued. Despite appearances, the likelihood of at least some linkage between the West Bank and Jordan remains quite high, and in this respect also the Camp David framework is realistic in specifying a Jordanian role in negotiations.

Finally, it should be noted that although the PLO enjoys near universal *verbal* support in the Arab world, PLO leaders complain regularly and bitterly in the Arab press over the subordination of the Palestinian cause to the interests of Arab states (Libya being the latest case). No Arab state regards support of the PLO as a primary interest; most seek to manipulate the Palestinian issue to their own benefit in intra-Arab rivalries. As Carter was indiscreet enough to note publicly, in his experience no Arab leader had ever privately urged the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. One of the last things that Jordan or Saudi Arabia wants is to strengthen the power and influence of Yasir Arafat. Even the Syrians are happy to see the PLO militarily weak, internally divided, and totally dependent on Arab governments. The idea that the PLO alone could disrupt any Middle East settlement overlooks this dependence; Arab states could control the PLO any time by withdrawing their support.

THE presence of all these differences not only within the Arab world at large but in the narrower world of the Palestinians themselves is something U.S. policy should be making use of in order to promote a practical settlement. Instead, the U.S. has persistently ignored these differences in favor of signaling its desire to deal with a PLO still committed to total ends. Thus it is no wonder that West Bank moderates have not stepped forward, and that U.S. policy has succeeded only in defeating itself.

It is conceivable that moderate Palestinian representation can come from within as well as from outside the PLO, but in either case the strategy for encouraging moderation must include a clear and unambiguous rejection of the PLO as now constituted. Anything else creates the impression among PLO leaders that they can gain acceptance without altering their goals. As Elie Kedourie has noted, American policy toward the PLO risks repeating the mistake committed in the 1930's by the British, who made Palestinian diplomacy dependent on the most extreme elements of the Arab community and thus effectively guaranteed the failure of their efforts—and the creation of today's problems.

With a U.S. policy of unambiguous support for

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the Camp David framework, the chances for substantial diplomatic progress on Arab-Israel issues would be much better than the experts would have us believe. The current hostility to Sadat should not obscure the fact that basic trends have been positive; consider the public positions of Arab countries now against their positions one or two decades ago. Even the Syrians followed Sadat's lead up to a point after the 1973 war, and remain formally committed to a settlement, based on UN Security Council Resolution 242, that implies acceptance of Israel. In fact only the PLO, together with Libya, Iraq, and South Yemen, cling to the rejectionist position that was universal in the Arab world only twelve years ago, at the time of the Khartoum conference after the 1967 war.

Against this background, it is not inconceivable that the Camp David framework could prove attractive. Much of the Arab criticism of Sadat involves timing and tactics; Sadat has moved too fast for his Arab partners and has in their minds given away too much in return for vague formulas. But if future negotiations achieve concrete results, the major criticism will have been met. Many moderate Palestinians originally reacted favorably to Sadat's initiative. In December 1977, 9,000 Nablus residents signed a petition in support of his moves (since then, pressure to conform, reinforced by events like the murder of the Imam of Gaza, has discouraged such public expressions). Clearly the actions of the radicals indicate a real fear that the Camp David framework might "seduce" the moderates; the unusual frequency of visits to Hussein by formerly hostile Arab leaders shows in a perverse way their recognition of Camp David's potential appeal and the need to counter it.

Nor should one despair of the autonomy talks. Egypt and Israel both have strong interests in keeping the diplomatic process moving, and as the deadline approaches there will be greater pressure to make concessions. Israel's initial proposals, so widely condemned, should be seen as an initial bargaining position, and we need to recall that the present government has more than once abandoned demands that had been described as basic and non-negotiable. But even if the deadline is missed (as it was with the Egypt-Israel treaty), negotiations will continue, and the Egypt-Israel treaty can in the meantime stand on its own. Eventually pressures for results, combined possibly with the return of a Labor government and growing disillusionment with the costs of military occupation in Israel, will produce an agreed-upon autonomy plan. The completion of such a plan would put an end to the immediate Egyptian role; if West Bank residents still declined to cooperate, the plan could simply be put on the shelf until attitudes changed. But it would become increasingly difficult for West Bank leaders to refuse to run their own affairs—especially as many aspects of autonomy could even be unilaterally put into effect by Israel.

But the United States must in the meantime put its full weight behind the delicate process of peace-building that is now unfolding. It must convincingly reject once and for all the Arab conception of an imposed peace, and stop sending signals that cast doubt on its commitment to the Camp David framework. It must make certain that military options remain unappealing, and that American actions strengthen the moderates rather than the militants in each country. The appeal of cooperation can be reinforced by stress on other issues of importance to countries in the area, getting away from the illusion that all relations with Arab countries are a function of U.S. ties with Israel. Aid to Egypt and actions to counter radical threats in the area are two possible courses.

When the United States has adhered to the realistic approach embodied in the Camp David documents, it has made progress. When it has tried to satisfy the opponents of the Camp David approach, it has succeeded only in jeopardizing the entire process. To recognize this simple truth is the beginning of wisdom for the United States in dealing with the Arab-Israel conflict.

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Gospel and Midrash

Hyam Maccoby

Over the last decade or so, academic literary criticism has come increasingly under the influence of the French school of structuralism, which applies anthropological and linguistic insights to the study of both myths and fiction. One of the convictions of this school is that there is no single "true" or original version of a myth or story, but that all changes and developments—even including interpretations—are equally authentic. This means that the real object of the critic's study is the totality of all available versions, of which the latest may well be the richest. Thus Claude Lévi-Strauss, in studying the Oedipus legend, includes Freud's interpretation as the legend's latest variant. (Lévi-Strauss's own interpretation is exempted from this treatment, however, presumably on the grounds that it is an objective and scientific appraisal. And this highlights from the start one of the dilemmas of the structuralist school of criticism: what is the status of criticism itself?)

As applied to the study of the Bible, the new approach, which has been used so far mainly in Old Testament studies, has some distinct advantages. It means that the critic can ignore the laborious business of searching for an "authentic" original version and can concentrate on the text as we have it, applying to it purely literary considerations. The whole question of finding historical truth is bypassed. The critic can take an entirely fresh look at the text, and can deal with obscurities or apparent contradictions just as he would in studying a play by Shakespeare or a novel by Henry James. Subtleties and profundities are no longer ruled out on the ground that the text is "primitive." This new respect for the text has led to some valuable and refreshing work.

Frank Kermode, a distinguished English literary critic and academic, whose chief interest in recent years has been in discerning the forms and patterns of narrative, has now turned this approach on a New Testament text, namely, the Gospel of Mark, the narrative of which contains some very puzzling problems.* Just because of its stark brevity and mysterious ruggedness, this Gospel invites literary treatment more than the other Gospels, and has indeed been found to be full of symbolism (particularly in the interesting work of Austin Farrer).

The chief problem is the ending of the Gospel, which has been called "the greatest of all literary mysteries." Since recent theory of narrative has paid particular attention to ending-forms, and Kermode himself has contributed to this study in his *The Sense of an Ending*, it is natural that he should be fascinated by this problem. The last twelve verses of Mark, as printed in standard editions, are missing in the earliest manuscripts, and are clearly a later hand's attempt to give the book a conventional ending (another shorter such attempt is also extant). The original ending was at the eighth verse: "Then they went out and ran away from the tomb, beside themselves with terror: they said nothing to anybody, for they were afraid." The last word of the book is thus the Greek word, *gar*, which means "for," and it is a matter of scholarly debate whether a Greek sentence (never mind a book) can grammatically conclude with this word. Even more surprising is that if the book ends at this point, it contains no record of anyone's seeing Jesus after his resurrection, and no statement that the disciples continued to spread the Gospel after the death of Jesus. Such an indeterminate, downbeat ending is common enough in modern novels, but can it have been a deliberate artistic effect on the part of Mark or whoever was the author of the Gospel? Or has the original ending been lost?

Before offering his answer to this question, Kermode gives much attention to another difficult passage in Mark, which interests him particularly because he thinks it is concerned with the problem of interpretation itself. This is the episode of the Parable of the Sower, or rather the sequel to the telling of this parable, as recorded by Mark:

> When he was alone, the Twelve and others, who were round him, questioned him about the parables. He replied, "To you the secret of the kingdom of God has been given; but to those who are outside, everything comes by way of parables, so that (as Scripture says) they may look and look, but see nothing; they may hear and hear, but understand nothing; otherwise they might turn to God and be forgiven (4:10-12).

The meaning of this passage hinges on the words "so that," which in Greek is *hina*, a word expressing purpose. By using this word, Mark presents a dismaying picture of Jesus expressing his message in a deliberately obscure man-

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ner in order to *prevent* the mass of people from achieving salvation. In the Gospel according to Matthew, on the other hand, this picture is softened by the substitution of the word *hoti*, which means "because," for the word *hina*—thus suggesting that it is the people's refusal to understand that excludes them from salvation, rather than Jesus' deliberate intention to exclude.

Christian commentators have found Mark's version most disturbing and have tried to explain it away in various ways, most often by considering Matthew's version more authentic. Kermode, however, regards such efforts (including Matthew's innocuous version itself) as arising from a failure to understand Mark's profundity and difficult originality. Mark, according to Kermode, is telling us something about parables, stories, explanations, and interpretations in general: namely, that all art and all interpretation of art is a process of exclusion, of setting up a barrier between those inside and those outside. Communication contains a tragic "irony," since the very means by which it is conducted create a mystique. No story, however simple, is transparent, and the need to interpret it only makes the meaning more opaque, for the interpretation too requires interpretation, and indeed only acts as an expansion, or new version, or "midrash," like the formation of a crystal. Kermode is thus able to relate Mark's *hina* to the parable told by the priest in Kafka's *The Trial*, about the man who is forever excluded from the Law, but who just before he dies observes a "radiance" coming from the gate as the guardian tells him, "This gate was made just for you. Now I am going to shut it."

That Mark had any such exquisite meaning in mind is very unlikely. But before discussing Mark's meaning, it is necessary to say something of Kermode's use of Jewish terms and of the supposed Jewish background of Mark's alleged semiotic subtlety. Here Kermode has to lean on secondary sources, which are not always reliable.

The Hebrew word for "parable" (*mashal*), Kermode tells us, can also mean "riddle," and he is therefore not impressed by the argument that, in rabbinic practice, parables were used to clarify, not to complicate. Quoting an article by John Drury as his authority, Kermode asserts: "The Jewish parable could certainly be allegorical and deliberately obscure (*cf.* Ezekiel), and there is no historical reason to believe that the parables of Jesus could not have been riddling or enigmatic from the beginning. Moreover, it was common rabbinical practice to offer private interpretations to favored insiders." On this last point, he cites an article by David Daube.

Unfortunately, both Drury on *mashal* and Daube on "private interpretations to favored insiders" are open to criticism. The word *mashal* can mean "riddle" only in biblical Hebrew, never in rabbinic Hebrew, where it signifies a simple saying, fable, or parable with a clear-cut meaning which is explicitly drawn, usually in exegesis of a biblical text. The interest of it lies in making the riddling text delightfully plain. For example: why does God say, "Return unto Me and I will return unto you" (Malachi 3:7)? Answer:

> This is like a king's son who was a hundred days' distance from his father. Said his friends to him, "Return to your father." He said to them, "I cannot. The way is too far." His father sent to him and said, "Go as far as you are able and I shall come the rest of the way to you." Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel, "Return unto Me and I will return unto you."

All midrashic parables, without exception, are of this type; there is not one that contains a deliberate obscurity.

As for the "common rabbinical practice" of offering "private interpretations to favored insiders," this is beside the point. All the instances cited by Daube (who gives a very inadequate analysis of them in his eagerness to equate them with New Testament examples) are of deliberately *simplified* explanations being offered to people who are unqualified to understand anything more profound, while the deeper explanation is given to those qualified to understand it and profit by it. Daube fails to grasp that this is almost the opposite of the New Testament examples, in which an obscure explanation is given to the multitude and a clear explanation to the inner circle of disciples, showing a deliberate policy of exclusion, not a tenderness for the incapacity of undeveloped intellects.

If Kermode had the slightest acquaintance with rabbinic parables at first hand, he could not say that they contain "deliberate obscurities." Jesus' parables, by contrast, which are all in the *form* of rabbinic parables, do contain curious contradictions and obscurities. C. H. Dodd (whose view Kermode rejects) was thus entirely correct when he ascribed the Gospel presentation of the parables to Hellenistic influence, since "in the Hellenistic world . . . the use of myths, allegorically interpreted, as vehicles of esoteric doctrine was widespread, and something of the kind would be looked for from Christian teachers."

What we have here, in other words, is an important changeover from one kind of religion to another, from a religion whose main object was to promote understanding throughout society to a religion whose object was to initiate a chosen few into a mystery. In this changeover, the parable played an interesting role; used by Judaism for one purpose, it was adapted by Christianity for another. Kermode, playing games with structuralist concepts, fails to notice what is going on.

But there are even more important things here that Kermode does not notice. Mark is not merely concerned to show that outsiders are excluded from the mystery; he is also concerned to identify the outsiders with the Jewish people as a whole. One of Mark's main theses is that the Jews have ceased to be the people of God. In the little episode before us, Jesus is shown as deliberately excluding the Jewish masses from salvation. This is why his parables are turned (by Mark and the Christian church) into riddles. Whereas, in historical fact, rabbis (including, no doubt, Jesus himself) used parables for the ex-

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press purpose of awakening the understanding of the common people, who could not be reached by abstract argument, Mark's Gospel represents Jesus as using parables to *prevent* the people from reaching understanding "lest they turn to God and be forgiven." (The words themselves are taken from Isaiah 6:9, where they are used ironically, as part of God's charge to Isaiah to waken the Jews to their sins; the implied threat that if the Jews do not repent they will lose God's favor is here construed as fulfilled fact.)

The difference between Mark's *hina* and Matthew's *hoti* is thus of the greatest thematic interest. It is not that Matthew regards the Jews as any less damned than Mark (Matthew's assertions of Jewish damnation in chapters 23 and 27 are more brutal than anything in Mark). It is rather that Mark regards the Jews as *destined* to be damned, while Matthew attributes their damnation to their sinfulness. Therefore, in Mark's conception, Jesus must not say anything to the Jews which would interfere with the workings of God's preconceived plan. He must not preach to them in such a way that they might repent, like the inhabitants of Nineveh in the Book of Jonah. For if that were to happen, the divine sacrifice—the death of Jesus—would be prevented from occurring.

There is a counterpoint throughout the Gospels between two conceptions of the role of Jews in the crucifixion: one stressing their wickedness, the other their destined role as executioners. The matter is summed up in Mark's verse about Judas (the eponymous representative of the Jewish people):

> The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born (14:21).

The same twin ideas (logically contradictory, but emotionally mutually reinforcing) are found in the Gospel conception of Satan, who has a role that is both preordained and wicked. Echoing the contradiction is the contrapuntal conception of the necessary sacrifice: the god-murder that is both a crime and a boon. Since it is a crime, there must be a scapegoat to bear the guilt of the murder without which mankind cannot be saved. The executioner, like the victim, is a sacrificial figure, for he too bears the sin of mankind.

It would be too simple to say that Mark sees the Jews as merely figures of destiny, but this aspect is more prominent in his Gospel than in Matthew. It is thus doubtful whether Mark's *hina* is morally more shocking than Matthew's *hoti*. If Jesus (in Mark's conception) deliberately excludes the Jews from salvation, this is because they have been chosen by God for the role of deicide. In a sense, this absolves them from blame. Matthew's *hoti*, laying the sin squarely on the shoulders of the Jews as a wicked people turning deliberately from the truth, is the more straightforwardly anti-Semitic conception. It is the combination of the two notions, however, that constitutes the distinctiveness of the anti-Semitism of the Gospels in general.

None of this appears in Kermode's interpretation, which concentrates instead on the pathos of hermeneutic exclusiveness. Where Mark is seeking to exclude a definite, identifiable set of people, Kermode makes him concerned with the general tendency of exegesis to exclude people who do not understand it, or who do not belong to the clique which claims to understand it.

THE same sort of consideration applies to Kermode's discussion of the problem of Mark's strange ending. Kermode is to be applauded here, as elsewhere, for his refusal to resort to emendation. He accepts the text as it is, and rightly sees a failure of literary perception in the various attempts by scholars to supply a conventional ending. Mark's ending is indeed deliberately inconclusive, with the disciples demoralized and the Resurrection only hinted at. But Kermode's explanation of this ending is again too literary.

Kermode relates the ending to a pattern of "intercalation" that he notes as characteristic of Mark's narrative style—i.e., a tendency to insert passages of narrative within the main story. Kermode suggests that the whole Gospel is such an "intercalation," since "it stands at the moment of transition between the main body of history and the end of history." This is an ingenious suggestion, and, within its limits, a good one. But it ignores Mark's chief preoccupations, which are not literary or philosophical but very much concerned with religious propaganda.

For Mark is telling us that Jesus' Jewish disciples failed him. They did not understand him, they betrayed, deserted, and denied him. The last words of the Gospel declare that "they were afraid." In glorious contrast to them, the Roman centurion declares, with perfect faith, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Kermode fails to notice the climactic significance of this speech). Certainly the deliberately inconclusive ending depicts a transition, but it is a transition of a definite historical character, from the authority of the Bishop of Jerusalem to that of the Bishop of Rome, the place where Mark's Gospel was written.

Here we may consider briefly the relationship between literary and historical considerations in the study of a text such as Mark's Gospel. First of all, there is the simple point that a text may be appreciated as a literary work even if it is used in quite a different and separate way as a source of historical inquiry. The Gospels can be regarded as finished literary works and assessed as such by literary criteria without regard for the stages by which they reached completion. At the same time, however, it is quite legitimate to use them in order to arrive at conclusions about the historical facts of Jesus' career and the development of the Christian church.

On the literary level, the Gospels form a seamless robe and embody a powerful dualistic myth that is timeless. As historical documents, they are full of indications of the process of their development from earlier sources, and the discernment of the particular direction in which they developed can lead, by a process of extrapolation, to the historical facts underlying them.

So far so good. But one cannot

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entirely rule out historical or moral considerations even when coming to a literary assessment. It is relevant to a literary judgment of Shakespeare's history plays, for example, that they are largely an exercise in political propaganda bolstering the Tudor dynasty. This puts them into a genre that is artistically lower than, say, the tragedies. Similarly, a recognition of the timeless literary nature of the Gospels does not put them beyond moral or historical considerations. We may admire the power with which the Gospels present their myth of sacrificial atonement—with its dramatic contrast of good and evil and its paradoxical picture of evil unwittingly contributing to cosmic good—while at the same time noting (even as a matter of *literary* importance) what is entailed in this shunting-away of moral responsibility, either to a perfect sacrificial figure or to an evil scapegoat or to both. The critic's perception that a partisan historical axe is being ground should lead in this case, as in the case of Shakespeare's history plays, to a revised estimate of the work's proper genre.

The study of the Gospels as pure literature is certainly an interesting and worthwhile activity. But it should not be forgotten that the Gospels were not written as pure literature. Any work that has an extra-literary aim in view, such as the propagation of a political or religious standpoint, cannot be assessed without asking what the author is trying to prove and what we as readers and moral beings think of the attitude that the author is so passionately trying to persuade us to adopt. (I omit discussion of the question of how far moral considerations enter into the assessment of *any* work of art.)

Thus, Kermode has a valuable and perceptive discussion of the growth of the Judas Iscariot story, showing how an abstract idea of Treachery, or the Opponent, is gradually fleshed out into a detailed "character" through various versions of the story; it is a case of story generating character, as opposed to the ideal of Turgenev and Henry James that character should generate story. This is excellent; but it is also limited. In discussing the Barabbas story, similarly, Kermode is content to note that a need to blame the Jews for the crucifixion and exonerate the Romans was one of the shaping factors of the story, but the point interests him only as a means to aesthetic understanding—in this instance, to the remark that "realism" and "followability" in a narrative are primarily literary devices, rather than indications of historical factuality.

This is indeed a consideration of some significance, but, even from a literary viewpoint, it is still more important to stress that the Barabbas episode belongs to the genre of propaganda. The episode focuses dramatically all the passionate propaganda purposes of the Gospel: the contrast between the pacifist, quietist, other-worldly Jesus and the politically-minded, this-worldly Barabbas (onto whom all the Jewish and political aspects of the historical Jesus have been displaced); the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish people and their demand for his crucifixion, whereby they forfeit their status as the people of God; the whitewashing of Pilate and the Roman occupation; the obliteration of differences among Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians in order to represent them as united in hatred of Jesus. The scene is thus a tract in dramatic form, justifying the Christian church in its bid to take over the Jewish "promises." To interpret this story in terms of formal narrative structure is to miss the greater part of its intended literary content, as well as to be insensitive to its role in the history of Christian anti-Semitism. (Kermode does permit himself one incidental expression of distaste for Matthew's verse, "His blood be on us and on our children," but this is the full extent of his reaction to the main theme.)*

IT WOULD seem necessary to enter a warning. The ultra-aestheticism of the structuralist approach may lead to a new kind of fundamentalism, by which the Gospels are put beyond assessment as to their purpose and message. We have experienced the same tendency in theology, where Rudolf Bultmann and his followers, by elevating the Gospel story to the status of myth, have attempted to place it beyond the reach of historical or moral criticism. Kermode's way of regarding the Gospels as a mysterious unitary text, requiring a purely literary interpretation, is an abdication of the function of judgment.

As for Kermode's doubts about the very possibility of interpretation, these must be ascribed to a failure of nerve. In recent years a switch has occurred in many academic disciplines—from a narrow empiricism based on irreducible "facts" to a subjectivism in which human language and pattern-making are held to create the whole of so-called reality. Both philosophies are really identical, in that they deny validity and objectivity to the value judgments involved in aesthetic and moral decisions.

Certainly there are great mysteries in the activity of interpretation. How do we know when to interpret and when to stop interpreting? How to switch from aesthetic to moral or to historical interpretation? How to discount our position either as Insider or Outsider? One thing at least we may learn from the great Jewish tradition of interpretation: that we need not be afraid of destroying a text by interpreting it, a fear that seems to underlie a great deal of structuralist thinking. The text is inexhaustible. There may be many levels and dimensions of interpretation, and a person who is excluded from one level—by temperament, intellect, or inclination—may be compensated on another. This is perhaps the meaning of Kafka's parable: the man who was excluded from all official interpretations of the Law (or who excluded himself from them) was rewarded before his death by a radiance that was invisible to the guardians of the Law.

* For my own view of the meaning of the Barabbas episode, see my *Revolution in Judea* (1973), chapter 15, and "Jesus and Barabbas," *New Testament Studies* 16, pp. 55-60.

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A Remarkable First Novel

Pearl K. Bell

THE Nineteenth Elegy of John Donne, which provides Johanna Kaplan with the title of her remarkable first novel, *O My America!*,* has nothing to do with America; the word serves as the unexplored terrain that is Donne's conceit for the "new-found-land" of his mistress's body. With ironic literalness, Miss Kaplan has appropriated Donne's cry of sexual exultation to her very different purpose—the invented idea of America which has obsessed self-made Jewish intellectuals like her protagonist, Ezra Slavin.

In unfolding the intricate and disorderly saga of Ezra Slavin, Johanna Kaplan has brought rare intelligence and satiric virtuosity to that overworked fictional subject, the American children of immigrant Jews. What distinguishes Miss Kaplan's rendering of this familiar type as a work of unmistakable originality, different from that of any other Jewish writer in America, is the completeness of her comic vision. She sees, she knows, and above all she hears the entire range of absurdity, pretension, cleverness, and ambition in that overwhelmingly Jewish milieu which is New York, West Side, middle class, liberal, permissive, "psychoanalytically oriented," and happily enslaved by the *Zeitgeist*.

Its spokesman and sage in the 1960's, Ezra Slavin, is a self-proclaimed anarchist and disturber of the peace, the author of books about Appalachia and frontier outlaws and a stream of vaguely Thoreauvian essays about the degradation of American life by technology and materialism. We come to know this disheveled ideologist of nonconformity not through his own vision of himself but through the exasperated, sardonic, yet grudgingly affectionate eyes of his eldest daughter, Merry, whose mother, the first of Slavin's three wives, died when she was born. And it is entirely in keeping with his exalted self-image as a nay-sayer and critic of American society that we first encounter Ezra Slavin, in Merry's acid reflections, as a bundle of high-minded disapproval. On the day of his death in 1972, she has put on a dress made in India to meet Ez (as she has always called him) for dinner, slyly aware that it

> would annoy her father because it was a dress and therefore an implicit bourgeois demand; because it was Indian, thus taking jobs away from mere subsistence-level American workers and encouraging the exploitation of Indian ones even poorer; and because its embroidery was machine-stitched—a once vital folk craft now brutally cut off from its real source, and so cheapening to a whole culture.

Who is this incorruptible thunderer, and where did he come from? Why does he boast so often, as though he were talking about another country and not his own, "I have had a lifelong affair with America"? Ezra Slavin was born around the turn of the century on the Lower East Side and, like so many other bright young men driven by ambition and impatience, felt nothing but irritated embarrassment toward his parents by the time he went to CCNY. Though he met his first wife in those grimy streets, the Polish-born Pearl Milgram was no illiterate greenhorn; she had been educated in a Warsaw *gymnasium*, gone to Hunter College, and worked as a court interpreter, all of which presumably enchanted Ezra as much as her beauty. What ruined the marriage, he tells Merry many years later, was Pearl's incomprehensible longing to be a Jewish madonna in thrall to "bourgeois domesticity"—that is, children—which he brushes aside as "one enormous piece of self-deception," and her equally unacceptable dedication to Zionism, which he dismisses as a "senseless, pathetic obsession with the Jews."

At Pearl's conveniently premature death, the older child, Jonathan, is carried off by an aunt, while Merry, the baby, is dumped with Ez's resentful old mother. *He* is too busy wooing his second wife, Isobel—a cool, exotically Gentile novelist from a small town in Wisconsin, a *real* American—until she produces a son to whom Ez is even more indifferent than he had been to Pearl's children, as though Nicky were "Isobel's son, not his, the result of some private, peculiar Protestant immaculate conception."

In the triumphant last years of Ezra Slavin's life, when his populist fantasies finally pay off, when he becomes a hero to the rebellious young and is much sought after by radio and television interviewers and the organizers of anti-war rallies, he conquers yet another bastion of America by marrying a poor and simple girl from Appalachia and settling in a dilapidated house in rural Massachusetts. As Merry angrily ruminates, looking at the awful house and its splintered chairs on a public-television program devoted to her father ("author, writer, teacher, thinker, pacifist, and fighter . . . grappling for the truth"):

> He didn't care how he lived, he didn't care how he looked, he didn't care what he ate: all those childhood privations were so natural to him that he lived with them still, carrying them aloft as if it were a matter of principle. But . . . he really just didn't care. . . . He has taught me nothing but austerity.

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Though Merry finds him outrageous, arrogant, dogmatically simple-minded, though she has good reason to hate her father's guts, she is still reluctantly touched by this restless and hortatory man who, "with that first-generation disease, had believed himself to be self-generated." He can be insufferable when he dispenses borrowed wisdom in Zabar's—"How many things there are here that I do not want!"—but she cannot help being moved by the bravado of the intellectual gambler who "put all his money on an idea of America he had just gone ahead and made up." Yet at the same time, what makes up the burden of this novel is the human wreckage left behind by the great man in the pursuit of his phantom lover, America.

ONE of the delights of Johanna Kaplan's first book, *Other People's Lives*, a collection of stories that for some perverse reason went almost entirely unnoticed, was her miraculous ear, and she has put this gift to even funnier and more telling use in *O My America!* Whether it is the jargon of a psychiatric social worker, the giddy incoherence of a noodle-headed teenager, or the complacency of the guests at a radical-chic brunch, she does not miss a thing.

Thus, when Merry misguidedly attempts to get to know her long-lost brother's family, his social-worker wife throws the textbook at her: "I understand that on your part there are obviously some strong elements of neurotic fantasy operating. But . . . we will *not* be manipulated into any kind of collusion with pathology." The featherbrained wife of a psychoanalyst doesn't like her neighbors because "they're not political at *all*. . . . They don't even go to concerts!" But this is tame stuff next to the incomparable babble of Ffrenchy (for Francesca), the elder of Ez Slavin's by-blows. If every other record of the glottal patois that passed for speech among the middle-class progressive-school would-be-hippie young toward the end of the 20th century were to vanish, one would still know from *O My America!* exactly how those creatures sounded as they stumbled through their linguistic underbrush of "like"s and "you know"s and "I mean"s and obscenities drained of all shock, indeed of any meaning whatever.

When Ez tries to tell fifteen-year-old Ffrenchy about the hardships his mother suffered as a girl in Russia, she shivers: "Whew! Was that because of like Auschwitz?" Horrified, he wants to know what goes on in her so-called school, and Ffrenchy obliges:

> Well, see, we don't exactly have *history*. We have this—this double-period thing called MACC—well, it used to be called LOOP: Living on Our Planet? . . . So now we have MACC, which is . . . oh, shit! I always forget it! Because it's like new and everything! It's—it's—oh, *I* know! It's Man: Animal of Community and Creativity—MACC. So, you know, it's sort of bullshit in a *way*. . . . Don't you see what I *mean*?

When Merry tells her that Ez's new wife comes from Appalachia, Ffrenchy wonders, "Is she, is she like this incredibly zonked, totally weird natural head? Like this strange, strange—you know, no shoes and everything. . . ."

Five years, three abortions, and one Hindu-meditation group later, Ffrenchy is "into" a new scene, motherhood, and names the baby Mountain Spring. "It's—it's like *zero* hassle! Zero!" she sings out to Merry, and proceeds to nurse her new toy in full view of West End Avenue because it's *"total* bliss-out!" The only thing wrong with Ffrenchy's astonishing monologues is that they go on too long before Miss Kaplan recovers her stride, shuts off the racket, and shifts back to the marrow of her story.

THOUGH Miss Kaplan is not in the least timid in mocking the hectic delirium of speech, politics, and modish attitudes that marked the metropolitan Jewish world of the 60's, she is unfailingly responsive to the anxiety and confusion that were not altogether drowned out by the noise of liberal certainty. Poor Ffrenchy suddenly wails, "Is this all you ever *get* in life? Is this *it*?" In one form or another the melancholy question is asked over and again; the answer, though often tacit, is not a cynical one. Miss Kaplan does not suffer from the occupational disease of satirists, heartlessness, and while she deploys her sense of the ridiculous with tough acumen, she is never inhumane.

By resisting the temptation to work entirely with the broad strokes of caricature, she has also enlarged the human scope of *O My America!*, kept it from seeming parochial in the way that novels which depend upon the comic sound and manner of a special place and time can sometimes be. Beyond the concrete particulars of Ezra Slavin and his world, beyond the fact that he is a Jew, a New Yorker, and a radical hero of the 60's, he is that more universal figure who recurs in many novels of family life, the egotistical father whose children become his victims. Though there are large differences of setting, character, and intention between Christina Stead's masterpiece, *The Man Who Loved Children*, and *O My America!*, Ezra Slavin is strongly reminiscent of Miss Stead's Sam Pollit, another self-glorifying iconoclast—indeed, a Fabian socialist and smug idealist perpetually lecturing his many children on the originality and nobility of his unconventional ideas about nature, science, education, family. But he is in fact an insensitive hypocrite, whose idealism is a means of manipulating his children and burnishing his vanity—just as Slavin, who cannot be bothered actually to *live* with his children, must still manipulate them along with the seraphic acolytes he bedazzles with his "luxurious intimacy-of-the-mind look."

Both Sam Pollit and Ezra Slavin are viewed, and seen through, by a smoldering eldest daughter whose mother died young, making her an awkward outsider in her father's new family. As Sam Pollit looks ahead to the utopian future his selfless efforts will bring about, he envisions his children "working with me and after me, when they understand my ideals. . . . Socialists of a new socialism. . . . I would produce mighty children, a tribe of giants to come after me." Sam's rhetoric is old-fashioned—the story takes place in Washington during

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the 1930's—but his words convey much the same demagogic cunning one hears in Ez Slavin's impromptu remarks to an anti-war rally in New York in 1965:

> I've been looking around today and I see that so many of you are really young. And it seems to me that your spirit . . . is remarkable. Because you have every right to be not just angry, but *furious*—with your parents, with *me*. Because this is the America we've bequeathed to you! The world's great egalitarian wonder, our forefathers' noble utopian dream!

Between the unctuous optimism of Sam Pollit and the disingenuous self-reproach of Ez Slavin, there is little to choose. Each of them is most at home on the great stage of ego, acting out his predatory dream of power.

MISS KAPLAN has grasped the slippery and difficult nature of this man with such flawless authority that we need no prototypes to understand him. At the same time, one cannot help noticing the similarity—of thought and manner, rather than of personal history—between Ezra Slavin and that countercultural demigod of the recent American past, Paul Goodman. Like Goodman, Slavin cherishes the image of himself as a lifelong adversary of the repressive forces that have stifled the free, untamed spirit of America and threatened "the community of men." In one *tour de force*, Miss Kaplan supplies us with the entire text of a typical Slavin essay, written in 1939, urging Americans not to fight in the wars of a "decadent and class-ridden Europe," to free themselves from the past and look "to our own and lawless future." How effortlessly the heir presumptive of Avenue B, who has never set foot west of the Hudson, croons his litany of nostalgia for "our" America, for "the real life of a farm community in the prairies, a mining town in the West, a fishing village on the New England coast"!

Miss Kaplan's ironic juxtaposition of the venerated public crusader and the private man—thoughtless son, rotten husband, negligent father—is the compelling heart of her novel. As we absorb the whole messy truth about this paragon of radical virtue, we may wonder how long he would have remained in cultural and political fashion. By dying in 1972, at the height of his glory, Ezra Slavin hedges this question as he had hedged so many others. But Miss Kaplan does not. Like many intellectual sons of immigrant Jews, Ez Slavin chooses to invent himself as a deracinated "stranger in the land"—the title of his book about Appalachia—as though he had sprung full-grown from the head of the Statue of Liberty. What Johanna Kaplan has demonstrated with such power and vitality is that the man who cuts himself off from his past also forfeits his future.

Music

On the Air

Samuel Lipman

OURS is the age of the electronic transmission and reproduction of music. Where once the musical experience of the listener was formed by face-to-face contact between musicians and audience, today one artist can perform for the whole world, and one solitary listener can have an almost unlimited choice of program material, some in live performance, most in the form of private or commercial recordings.

It all began with Edison's infant phonograph of a century ago. Its first years were creaky, squawky, and exclusively vulgar. But by the early 1900's—most brilliantly through the early efforts of Enrico Caruso—the acoustic reproducer became a worthy kind of musical instrument. It could be "played" by anyone able to wind the motor and place the pickup on the record.

Yet no matter how many acoustic records were sold, no matter how many young people found their first experience of musical art through these pieces of shellac compound, in fact the phonograph collapsed in mass consciousness when the radio became commercially viable after World War I. Even the inefficient radios of the mid-1920's sounded better than the old phonograph records. Moreover, listening to the radio was at first even more satisfactory than hearing the then newly introduced electrical discs. And radio programming was always changing, always up-to-date; best of all, after a single original investment, radio programs were free.

Since it had usually been thought that popular culture was a mass phenomenon and high culture a matter of elite taste, it was only to

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be expected that the airwaves would be filled with dance and show music appealing to the widest audience. Surprisingly, however, serious music was also present at the creation of broadcasting. Not only was the best in music quickly perceived as a means of earning respectability for radio and its entrepreneurs, but performing organizations across the country also eagerly embraced radio for the twin purposes of music education and of bringing the organizations themselves to public notice.

No musical institution was more perceptive in this regard than the New York Philharmonic. As early as 1922, some concerts of the Philharmonic, at first originating from the Great Hall of the City College of New York, had been broadcast on station WEAF. Soon these concerts found sponsors, among them the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and later the Radio Corporation of America. As time passed, more concerts were broadcast each year; finally, in 1930, the Philharmonic inaugurated a series of regular weekly broadcasts of full-length concerts, transmitted from Carnegie Hall under the auspices of the Columbia Broadcasting System.*

Other established orchestras, including those in Philadelphia and Boston, had been eager to follow the Philharmonic's lead. In addition, individual radio stations employed staff musicians to present programs of classical music featuring soloists, chamber ensembles, and even full orchestras. What single stations could do, the quickly expanding networks could do better. Network orchestras played for an increasing number of variety shows containing the classics. In 1937, with the founding of the NBC Symphony Orchestra for Arturo Toscanini, commercial support of serious music on radio reached its climax. For seventeen years this orchestra, bearing in every way the stamp of Toscanini's dominating musical personality, remained in the forefront of American musical life, bringing art to millions and glory to NBC.

Thus, throughout most of the age of radio, orchestral music, performed by the leading artists of the day, was available nationally on two weekly broadcasts and locally on frequent though scattered presentations of equally important concerts. Opera was to be nearly as fortunate. Back in the technological dark age of 1910, the Metropolitan Opera had been the scene of an experiment by radio pioneer Lee De Forest in which a performance of *Cavalleria rusticana* (then only twenty years old) starring Caruso was broadcast to a small audience comprised of radio amateurs, ships in the harbor, and a few invited engineers and journalists. Real broadcasting did not begin until Christmas day of 1931, when *Hansel and Gretel* (in the original German) was transmitted, underwritten by NBC. The first sponsored broadcast of the Met was presented at the end of 1933, and in 1940 Texaco began its historic assumption of responsibility for the Met Saturday matinees, a responsibility it has borne without interruption to the present time.

In general this reasonably satisfactory state of affairs was to continue without change until the war-delayed coming of television in the late 1940's. At first gradually, and then with frightening speed, both the excitement and the audience left radio. Before many years had passed, radio became merely an outlet for brief news summaries and endless circulation and recirculation of records, mostly pop and mostly ephemeral. Staff musicians were let go, first at the local level and then finally by the networks.

The final sign that the great days of music on radio were over came in 1954, when corporate management decided not to retain the NBC Symphony after Toscanini's withdrawal that year on account of the debilities of age. Something of NBC's attitude toward its artistic responsibilities may be gathered from the story told in *Agitato*, Jerome Toobin's entertaining memoir (1975) of his years in music administration. As he describes what happened, a committee of the orchestra, in order to get NBC to change its decision, met with Samuel Chotzinoff, an NBC executive (and former pianist and music critic) who had responsibility for music programs. The committee members poured out their hearts to Chotzinoff, explaining the importance of the orchestra to music, to NBC's parent RCA, and as a living tribute to their revered Maestro Toscanini. Toobin goes on:

> Chotzinoff listened and, when they were through, said, "Do you really want to honor Toscanini? Then die." A pause. "Your orchestra, I mean," he concluded, lamely.

The orchestra, of course, died. Though the players tried to keep the orchestra going under a new name, Symphony of the Air, the glorious ensemble soon petered out. Although it would be nice to report that CBS behaved better with the radio broadcasts of the Philharmonic, the unfortunate truth is that nine years later, in 1963, the corporate axe fell on these concerts as well; the broadcasts stopped altogether by 1967.

What was now unavailable on radio was hardly to be found on television. At first glance this might seem something of a puzzle: why should serious music have been unable to make the transition from radio to television in the same way as soap operas, variety shows, sports, and live news coverage? There are in fact two fundamental reasons, the first relating to the nature of music, and the second relating to the inherent attributes of television as a medium of communication. These reasons are well worth examination, for they remain as valid today as they were in the time of radio's decline and television's growth.

The musical reason for the failed transition to television is really quite obvious and indeed almost a truism. Music, after all, is sound; it is meant to be heard, and when it is clearly heard, it is, in principle, fully experienced. The visual aspect, welcome and even vital as it is to many, is felt by the most ex-

* It is significant (and perhaps even startling to an observer of today's world of serious music) that the prime mover in the relationship between the Philharmonic and CBS—which continues in reduced circumstances to this day—was the legendary impresario Arthur Judson, at the same time manager of the orchestra and a founder and major stockholder of CBS.

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perienced and trained listeners to be often a distraction and sometimes even an adulteration. It is basically this fact which accounts for the spectacular long-term success of phonograph records and audio tape, and which accounted originally for the wide following of art music broadcasts on the radio. Such was the case when the radio (and the phonograph) had not reached the present state of high-fidelity reproduction, and it is even more the case today, when the sound available on radio far surpasses anything that can be heard from any currently mass-marketed home television set.

From television's side, music seemed for many years both irrelevant and unrewarding. Because the number of channels in any one locality was originally limited to little more than half of the 12 places on the dial,* and also because in television, equipment and production are inherently more expensive than in radio, the audience served by each channel must be many times larger than that served by any radio station in a given area. Thus, television, much more so than radio, had to aim from the first at the broadest possible audience at every moment.

So television found little room in its schedules for great music. Still, attempts were made: some programs which had found large audiences on radio by presenting tuneful classics in star performances—most notably the Bell Telephone Hour—did have several years of television life. Opening nights at the Met were televised in 1948, 1949, 1950, and 1954. How unseriously these presentations were regarded may be seen from the unhappy fact that no copies of them exist today. NBC made a valiant effort in the early 1950's to establish a continuing opera theater, and one of the fruits of that effort was the commissioning and presentation of Gian Carlo Menotti's Christmas staple, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, in 1951. CBS, too, tried. Building on the success of Leonard Bernstein in handling musical subjects for the *Omnibus* series in the mid-1950's, the network began in the 1957-58 season to present the conductor with the New York Philharmonic, at first in children's concerts and then in regular programs. The regular programs were eventually discontinued, but the children's concerts, hugely successful, continue on CBS, on a limited basis, today.

BUT despite these isolated flashes, the generalization holds: there has been no room in the normal operation of television for serious musical art. However, television has not had to remain restricted to normal operation. The 1950's saw the rise of educational broadcasting, and as has happened before in American history, the idea of education came to justify elite taste and its satisfaction. Music was to be one of the major beneficiaries of this new development, for here was a way to do something for culture and at the same time have the bill paid by the government, either directly through legislative appropriations or indirectly through tax deductions for charitable contributions.

National Educational Television, a forerunner of the present Public Broadcasting Service, began with a series presenting the Boston Symphony Orchestra; by the 1962-63 season NET was sporadically televising the concerts of many orchestras, mostly American, but also occasionally foreign. In addition to these national transmissions, local educational stations showed admirable initiative in producing programs of soloists and ensembles at minimal cost (and with minimal remuneration to the artists). These often touchingly simple productions were frequently exchanged with other local public stations for widespread but haphazard broadcast.

Lacking, however, was the kind of money needed for luxurious presentations. And lacking too was central organization and sponsorship to guarantee integrated efforts in production, publicity, and fund-raising. These two desiderata were provided by the political and social developments of the past two decades.

After the assassination of John Kennedy in 1963, the putative association of the late President and his wife with high culture—or at least with the celebrities of high culture—made arts centers and support for the arts themselves seem a fitting memorial. The Great Society of Lyndon Johnson, though hardly so aesthetically presumptuous as Camelot, did just as much to create a climate favorable to public spending on art and music; aid to artists and performers came to be seen as a most desirable kind of unemployment relief.

The result of all this has been the rise of public culture, as expressed institutionally by the phenomenal growth of both the Public Broadcasting Service and the National Endowment for the Arts. The NEA has by now become the major factor in determining the level of support and the direction of musical life in America.† PBS has in effect become a competitive fourth network, spending large sums of money on both production and the publicity it feels necessary to insure that its programs are watched by a large and ever-growing audience. While NEA and PBS policy decisions are no doubt made independently, their actions are deeply related. The NEA supports many PBS programs, and PBS presents the work of the major recipients of NEA patronage. The result of this common effort in music is the offering on PBS this season of the most ambitious, well-thought-out, and well-financed opera and orchestral programs in American television history.

THE evidence of the first half of the current season is stunning. During this period PBS has shown six operas in live performance, including Verdi's *Otello* and Kurt Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* from the Metropolitan Opera; from the New York City Opera came another Weill opera, *Street Scene;* Gounod's *Faust* was performed by the Chicago Lyric Opera, Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* by the San Francisco Opera, and

* And so it remains today, despite the opening-up of the UHF channels, more numerous but also more difficult to receive and tune.

† For an account of the rise of the NEA and a consideration of the factors involved in government funding of the arts, see my article, "Funding the Piper," in COMMENTARY, January 1979.

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Bizet's *Carmen* by the Vienna Opera. Also from Vienna came a concert of operatic excerpts entitled "A Night at the Vienna Opera," a Bernstein performance of the Mahler Ninth Symphony, and a performance under Herbert von Karajan of the Bruckner Ninth. The Dresden State Symphony was shown in a concert at the United Nations in New York. Among American orchestras, the New York Philharmonic appeared three times featuring such famous soloists as Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, Emil Gilels, and Luciano Pavarotti. The Philadelphia Orchestra appeared in a tribute to its retiring music director, called "Ormandy at 80," and the Boston Symphony presented weekly concerts previously taped and edited to one-hour length. Two additional operas were shown, though not in live productions; they were Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* and Menotti's *Amahl*.

Many of these events were intended to be shown more than once. They were usually rerun almost immediately on the stations where they were first shown, and were then circulated to non-commercial outlets on the UHF band where they will continue to appear for some time to come. Due to the proliferation in recent years of home video recording equipment, innumerable copies, some of quite remarkable fidelity, exist now in the hands of music lovers everywhere; their existence has been legitimated by a federal court decision. Equally legitimate, and vastly superior in sound quality, are audio tapes made on home cassette machines from the FM simulcast broadcasts which often accompany major PBS television music transmissions.

GIVEN opera's use of visual as well as aural elements, it is plain that of all musical forms it stands to gain the most from television. Indeed, the same selling point might be made for opera on TV as is made for sports: one sees it better at home than from even a good seat in the stadium.

So, at least, it seemed in the Metropolitan Opera *Otello*, a telecast of the current season's opening night in September. The star of the performance, aside from the brilliant singing of Placido Domingo in the title role, was the picture. Seen in the opera house, the Met production is impressive in its opulence; when it is translated to the screen, the viewer becomes conscious of the richness of color and the clarity of the action. Rarely can members of a chorus have seemed so convincing under the clinical eye of the television camera as they did in the opening crowd scenes. The camera work itself was smooth and varied, a tribute to the experience the Met has now gained in its increasingly frequent television presentations. Best of all was the ability of the production to sustain, throughout the opera, the illusion that the television picture was a representation of physical reality rather than of more or less adequate sets.

The San Francisco *Gioconda*, broadcast some days earlier, did not quite come up to the Met's standards. One was always conscious of watching a staged performance; despite the provision of a real fire on board ship at the end of Act II, the sets seemed all too often the product of the carpenters' and painters' craft rather than solid wood and stone. While the cast did employ the services of the internationally renowned Pavarotti and Renata Scotto, their efforts seemed inadequately supported by both the orchestra and the conductor. Still, despite the flaws, the performance came across as both worthy and enjoyable.

By contrast, the Vienna *Carmen* was extraordinary in several ways. From the first notes of the Prelude, one's attention was seized by the powerful conducting of Carlos Kleiber and the brilliant playing of the Vienna Philharmonic. Domingo was Don José, and he sang just as beautifully as he had in the *Otello*. Dramatically and musically the only major flaw was the Slavic sound and mood of Elena Obraztsova; her Carmen seemed no more related to the atmosphere of the opera than her Amneris at the Met several years ago had seemed to fit into Verdi's *Aida*. But dwarfing all other considerations was the physical quality of the video image itself. Razor-sharp and delicately colored, the image seemed to reflect a higher level of technical achievement than can regularly be seen in this country.

The Chicago *Faust* was disappointing. Inferior orchestral playing, and tacky sets attempting to convey a kind of delicate, allusive atmosphere ill-suited to the limitations of television, combined with fussy and often pointless stage direction to produce the total effect of a provincial performance, despite the presence of an international cast including Mirella Freni, Nicolai Ghiaurov, and Alfredo Kraus.

The two Weill operas, *Street Scene* and *Mahagonny*, made strikingly different impressions. Though *Street Scene* has been a box-office success in New York, its presentation on television seemed much of a piece with the general run of City Opera efforts in recent years—earnest, ambitious, and withal still lacking. In the past the City Opera has made its mark by bringing something of the virtues of the American musical theater to opera; with *Street Scene* it has attempted to present as an opera a work which started life as a musical. Whatever the value of such an experiment in general, here, where Weill's music and Elmer Rice's story both seem so dated, the result was stiff and affected.

Much attention was naturally centered on the Metropolitan *Mahagonny*. Though the opera was written as long ago as 1930, its choice for production by the Met represents the culmination of much effort to find viable contemporary works. While *Mahagonny* is indeed more up-to-date than almost everything else the Met does, it is surely ironic that in its quest for contemporaneity the Met should have come up with a work so bitterly and mockingly hostile to the economic system and social ethos which built and supports the opera company itself.

These considerations aside, of all the operas seen on television this season, *Mahagonny* seemed by far the most appropriate to the screen. Bertolt Brecht's libretto is gripping and incisive in its cynicism; mainly because Weill's mostly thin music nowhere gets in the way, the English words, well and clearly enun-

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ciated by the singers, were almost always easily distinguishable. The acting, too, was excellent, and the characters came across forcefully and individually. Teresa Stratas scored a memorable success in the role of Jenny. Though she perhaps lacked the offhand decadence which Lotte Lenya might have brought to the role, Miss Stratas nevertheless sang magnificently, looked touchingly beautiful, and projected a waiflike and deeply moving personality. The production was simple but suggestive, and visually striking with its hints of between-the-wars poster style. Finally, because the production was in English, the television screen was not disfigured by the ubiquitous subtitles which marred the Italian and French operas discussed here

Little need be said about the presentations of *Amahl* and *La Voix humaine*. Whatever charm Menotti's score may have possessed at its first appearance has long since faded, and in its latest production the work seemed sentimental and even mawkish. Poulenc's quintessentially French work, dependent as it is on the exact sounds of the French words written by Jean Cocteau, seemed in English hysterical without being affecting. What was fatally lacking in this performance was style and manner; the work's back-to-back billing in one evening with a rendition of the words without music acted by Liv Ullmann in Scandinavian-English only made too much of a poor thing.

Despite the criticisms which can be made of specific productions, it must be concluded that so far this season television has gone a long way toward justifying its employment for opera. The medium's present limitations—principally the near-universality of small-screen sets producing wretched sound, but also the more basic lack of three-dimensional visual representation—seem less significant than the possibility television presently offers of bringing operas in high-level productions to those who have little or no other opportunity to experience them. For those who do, television must in the foreseeable future remain a distant second-best to live performance.

Because orchestra concerts are so much less dependent than operas on the visual element, they also seem decidedly less interesting on television. The instruments of one orchestra look, after all, very much like those of another, and they are all played in much the same way; oddly enough, one emoting, gesticulating, coiffured conductor also begins to look like all the others. Not only is the resultant effect one of boredom; paradoxically the repetitive screen images serve to concentrate attention not on the music but on the activity of music-making, and on the peculiar and funny-looking ways that some people behave. Even the merest hint of such a reaction on the part of a viewer can distract attention from the music and eventually come to discredit the entire musical enterprise.

The most absorbing of the recent televised concerts were those which offered something other than interchangeable performances of the music. Star singers, for example, are not interchangeable; their fame rests not only on vocal excellence but on the specific persona each one communicates visually and aurally to an audience. So it was to be expected that orchestra concerts starring singers would prove the most interesting.

The first of these star events produced domestically during the past season was the Joan Sutherland-Marilyn Horne concert in October, with Miss Sutherland's husband, Richard Bonynge, leading the New York Philharmonic in the accompaniments. The singing was self-assured and brilliant, and the combination of great vocalism with the backing of a major orchestra proved as irresistible on television as it had during a dress rehearsal in the hall.

The second vocal concert was less distinguished musically and also rather more controversial. Tenor Luciano Pavarotti is the most reliable, accurate, sweetly strong-voiced Italian tenor before the public today; his personality is compellingly charming and altogether winning. The concert, again with the Philharmonic, was conducted by Zubin Mehta, whose long suit is also vibrant public charm. Whereas Pavarotti's singing on this occasion impressed some observers as less fresh than it had been in the past, Mehta's conducting seemed, at least to me, some of his best work in New York to date. It was vivid and colorful (a careful performance of the Beethoven Egmont Overture excepted), and nicely calculated to draw forth the last ingratiating drops of tuneful passion from the famous works Pavarotti had chosen.

Perhaps the mood of the entire concert was best caught in one of the closing selections, the beginning of Act III of *Tosca* from the short orchestral introduction through Cavaradossi's familiar aria *E lucevan le stelle*. Mehta and Pavarotti were joined by a boy soprano (as an unseen shepherd's voice) and the violinist Itzhak Perlman to sing the few lines of the Jailer. It was Perlman's vocal debut and possibly, as a New York critic hinted, his farewell too. He really did not do badly, but one could only wonder on what musical grounds he had been chosen. The effect on the total performance was predictably again one of charm—Perlman's own personal aura combining with the palpable air of friendship among the participants on the stage. The suitability of all this charm to the tragedy of *Tosca* remains debatable.

STILL another concert of the Philharmonic, along with Mehta, featured Soviet pianist Emil Gilels. Here the fare was undeniably substantial. The program began with the Third Leonore Overture of Beethoven, continued with the Bartok Concerto for Orchestra, and ended with the widely known Tchaikowsky Piano Concerto. After a dutiful and sometimes rough rendition of the Beethoven and a persuasive account of the Bartok, the Tchaikowsky closed the concert with a resounding thud. The once perfect technical mastery of Gilels is now in lamentable condition, a fact ignored only by those who hear what is in their memories rather than what is being played now. Close camera work made only too obvious the pianist's present plight. Here television was—perhaps inadvertently—revealing, and none of Mehta's motions on the podium

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or the hyperbolic comment with which these programs are liberally supplied could conceal the pathos.

Two programs presented something rather different from the reproduction of a concert. The Eugene Ormandy commemoration by the Philadelphia Orchestra included the familiar Second Symphony of Rachmaninoff, a work much performed by the conductor. Viewers were also given a sizable portion of Ormandy's recollections of Rachmaninoff, as well as his own thoughts on what he had accomplished during his Philadelphia tenure. Even more solid as verbal material were the musical comments and rehearsal excerpts of Leonard Bernstein accompanying his performance of the Mahler Ninth Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic. On this occasion, as always, Bernstein proved himself our cherished master of the *haute vulgarisation* of music; in addition, the performance itself was movingly conducted, and most beautifully played by the orchestra.

Indeed, it is sad to report that throughout all the events I have seen recently, performance honors were captured by European rather than American orchestras. The broadcast of the Dresden State Symphony under Herbert Blomstedt from the imperfect acoustical ambience of the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations, for example, was a revelation of orchestral ensemble and musical penetration by the players themselves; the performance of the *Meistersinger* Prelude alone seemed on a level rarely approached in this country.

As if to prove how little television has to offer the straight performance of music, the most satisfying television orchestra concert this season, the performance of the Bruckner Ninth with the Vienna Philharmonic, had little need of visual manifestation at all. The hour-long program was almost completely filled by the symphony; there was thus time for little more than a minute of the spoken word. The customary shots of orchestra and conductor were tasteful and restrained; Karajan's ample movements and grimaces were seemingly meant for the orchestra rather than for the viewing audience. Incredibly refined orchestral playing of the most affecting warmth, led by a conductor whose analytical skill is no less acute than his ear for timbre and medody, produced a mood of total absorption in the music.

IT WOULD be kinder not to spend too much time on the one major adult presentation of serious music on commercial television so far this season. This was the highly touted NBC production, "Live From Studio 8H." Once again, the stars (with the addition of soprano Leontyne Price) were familiar from PBS: Mehta, Perlman, and the New York Philharmonic. The program was tied to the mythic name of Toscanini. Not only was the concert broadcast from the studio whose name was a byword for the poor sound of so many Toscanini records, but the music played on this occasion included works by composers "identified," in the words of the NBC press release, "with performances by Toscanini and the NBC." The point was further driven home by an intermission feature, hosted by Mehta, showing kinescopes of Toscanini conducting (in 1948 and 1949) breathtaking actual performances of the orchestra.

Faced with such competition, Mehta and his forces did not come close to a draw. Leontyne Price, in excerpts from Verdi's *Aida* and *La Forza del destino,* was vocally variable, alternating beautifully produced notes with hollow chest tones and strident tops. The orchestral performances of the Overture to *Forza* and Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries* seemed both ragged and booming. While Perlman may well have been made uncomfortable by being restricted to the last movement alone of the Beethoven Violin Concerto, his facial expressions while playing betrayed nothing but amused satisfaction. Only the Ravel *Daphnis and Chloe* Suite no. 2 sounded on a high level, an achievement for which credit must be given not merely to Mehta but also to Pierre Boulez, whose immaculately prepared performance of the complete score was one of the glories of recent Philharmonic history.

A further comment must be made. The NBC program was interrupted and blemished by the intrusion of commercials, no less vulgar for all their pretentiousness. But the PBS programs were similarly blemished by commercials. On public television these are not, of course, called commercials, but in their effort to sell a product they are commercials in everything but name. The product they sell is, in theory, music and culture; in practice it is the performing institution and the careers of the stars the institution has engaged. Everyone appearing on these programs speaks in honeyed tones of the wonder of it all. Phrases like "the really great superstars" and "star-studded" abound; during the Joan Sutherland-Marilyn Horne program the announcer described what he saw as "marvelous reflections of joint admiration and satisfaction on the faces of [the artists]." Almost everywhere souvenir booklets are hawked, and sometimes free gifts and premiums are offered. It is all dismayingly like TV sports—but lacking the occasional objectivity and even skepticism of sportscasters.

THE reasons underlying this hucksterism are all too plain. For the artists the goal is what it always has been—fame and money. For the institutions, the goal is, simply put, survival. In a time of rising budgets, reduced participation by big contributors, and loss of contemporary intellectual relevance, the only hope lies in an expansion of the uneducated audience. A massive new audience can hardly be expected to enter concert halls and opera houses; its natural habitat can only be television land.

The participants in this quest are quite open about their intentions. The morning after the Met *Otello* (which indeed may have reached as many as ten million viewers), the New York *Times* quoted the company's executive director as saying:

> We average 25,000 letters from people who haven't been on our lists with each new telecast. . . . The wider we reach, the more access we have to both federal funding and private contributions

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And the Met's president added:

> We hope to get considerable revenue from electronics of all sorts —cable TV, video disks, cassettes and tapes. . . . We've got to play to the widest possible audience. And with satellite television, the world is there.

MEANWHILE, far from the klieg lights and PR agents of television, serious music on radio has taken a new lease on life. For now, more than thirty years into the age of video, the real music lover's home is still radio. The once despised radio now offers an unequaled variety of great music, in concert performances from all over the world. So much, indeed, is available that one's experience of it is limited only to the time one has for listening—and to the number of FM tuners and tape recorders one has available to record simultaneous programs.

In the New York metropolitan area, for example, in addition to the Metropolitan broadcasts of the entire season, there are available during the year the Salzburg Festival and the performances of the San Francisco Opera, along with weekly concerts by the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, and the Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Chicago Orchestras. Chamber music is broadcast from the Library of Congress, and solo recitals from Carnegie and Tully Halls as well as the 92nd Street "Y." The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the series at the Frick Museum, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, the Budapest Festival, the Aspen Festival, even festivals of Women's Music. . . . The list is endless, and the result is a cornucopia of today's musical life.

From the standpoint of the performers whose work is now being widely circulated and the music lovers whose every taste is now being supplied, this plenty on the airwaves can only be welcomed. For these producers and consumers more must always seem better. Yet the very success of the electronic transmission of music poses several disturbing questions. Is all this activity, on radio and television alike, good for the continued existence of live concerts? What is the effect of all this easy access to acknowledged masterpieces on the writing and the writers of new music? Has all this easy listening thinned the ranks of those most vital members of the audience, the cultivated amateurs who experience music by playing it themselves?

Perhaps all these questions are no more than polite ways of getting at the most troublesome problem of all: is there a limit to the desirable size of the audience for high musical culture? Individual programs and performers will come and go but this problem will remain, and it will increasingly be the task of an independent music criticism to address it.

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Books in Review

Climate of Treason

THE FOURTH MAN. By ANDREW BOYLE. *Dial Press/James Wade. 504 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by ERIC M. BREINDEL

KIM PHILBY, Donald Maclean, and Guy Burgess were high-ranking wartime and postwar British civil servants. Philby was an intelligence official, Maclean a rising Foreign Office bureaucrat, and Burgess a BBC producer who drifted between the expanding security apparatus and Whitehall. All three belonged to the British ruling elite, and were products of establishment families, good public schools, and Cambridge. All became Communists while at Cambridge; all were later spies for the Soviet Union; and all three managed to defect to Moscow before being caught. Burgess and Maclean fled to Russia in 1951, while Philby was able to hang on until 1963 before making his escape.

This is obviously not a new story. Much has been written about the Philby-Burgess-Maclean affair. One of the spies, Philby, has even produced an autobiography, written in Moscow (where he now lives and works for the KGB) and published in England and America. But a number of questions have still remained unanswered. Thus, Andrew Boyle's study, based on numerous interviews, and on FBI and CIA Freedom of Information Act releases, had been awaited anxiously by those interested in learning more about the men themselves, the nature of their activities, their impact, their accomplices, and the reasons for their manifest success.

Boyle, a first-rate biographer, who, like Burgess, worked for the BBC, and, like Philby and Burgess, was involved in intelligence work, has written a good, but disappointing book. Part of the reason American readers may feel let down is that Boyle's single most important contribution has been to compel Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to reveal that Sir Anthony Blunt, the eminent art historian and official surveyor of the royal pictures, also belonged to the spy ring. The exposure of Blunt, who is referred to in Boyle's text as "Maurice," has led to demands for a government inquiry and to the naming of more names. A controversy over who was or was not a spy, who did or did not assist in what was obviously a massive cover-up, and who was or was not responsible for a series of critical security mishaps, continues to rage in the British press. But beyond the identification of Blunt, whom Boyle, for fear of a libel suit, had to refrain from calling by name, there is little in these pages in the way of new information comparable to what is emerging in the newspapers.

Boyle can certainly claim credit for triggering the spate of revelations. But his book itself is flawed. The title of the American edition, *The Fourth Man,* is quite misleading; Blunt (Maurice) figures little in the story and it is unfortunate that the publishers thought it appropriate to try to take advantage of a breaking story by adjusting the book's title. *Climate of Treason,* the British title, is far more fitting. The book is indeed about the climate, personal and political, which fostered treason. To use the term "Fourth Man" is in any event somewhat deceptive. For a period of years, speculation was rife about a "Fourth Man," a master-agent who supposedly recruited Philby, Burgess, and Maclean and directed their espionage efforts. Not only was Blunt not the Fourth Man in this sense, it is now clear that there was, in fact, no such person. A considerable number of spies, perhaps as many as two dozen, were part of the network. But no one person recruited the members; nor did the ring have a single overseer.

If *Climate of Treason* is a more appropriate title, Boyle's treatment of the "climate" is only partially successful. For explanatory political context, he relies rather heavily on a number of tired themes: the imminent collapse of the British empire caused the upper-class youth of the 1930's to look toward alien, messianic ideologies (Communism and fascism) in order to give their lives meaning; confirmed opponents of Hitler, disgusted at the apparent inability of the decadent democracies to combat the Nazi menace, took to believing that only Stalin could vanquish the evil of fascism; the economic impact of the Depression led many to lose faith in capitalism and, therefore, to turn to Marx and Moscow. All this may suffice as an interpretation of why some who reached maturity during Auden's "dishonest decade" became Communists. But treason, despite Whittaker Chambers's claims to the contrary, is an altogether different matter. And, in any case, more is required to explain the phenomenon of clinging at all costs to a cause the bankruptcy of which was apparent, if not by the purge trials of the late 1930's, then certainly after the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.

Boyle's rehearsal of these rationalizations does not really shed all that much light on why Philby, Burgess, Maclean, and the few unnamed others spied for Moscow. But is more light necessary? Most societies produce traitors. Only some spies are motivated by sustained ideological conviction. Financial reward, fear, blackmail, sheer inertia, and various character defects may just as often serve as the impetus. In the case of these three traitors, it seems clear that commitment to Communism can be deemed a secondary factor.

Burgess, probably the brightest of the group, was a provocatively overt homosexual in a society not all that tolerant of sexual deviance,

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contemporary mythology about Britain in the decadent 30's notwithstanding. Maclean was an insecure, alcoholic, bisexual who, Boyle believes, was blackmailed by Burgess into spying—photographs recording a night of sexual indiscretion apparently served as the blackmail instrument. Philby (also a bisexual according to recent press revelations) was the son of H. St. John Philby, an eccentric Arabist who served as a court adviser to King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. Philby senior's sense of loyalty to Britain is indicated by the fact that shortly after World War II began, his bitter attacks on the British war effort alienated him even from Ibn Saud and eventually led to his arrest and conviction under the Defense of the Realm regulations. That the stammering son of this pretentious misfit should have had a somewhat underdeveloped patriotic sensibility is not, in the last analysis, all that astounding.

BOYLE's discussion of the three traitors themselves is richer than his treatment of the environment which spawned them. It is entertaining to read of Burgess's elusive, manipulative, roguish charm; this character trait enabled him to secure an appointment as personal assistant to the Minister of State in the Foreign Office after World War II, by which time his tendency toward personal excess was as widely recognized as his pro-Soviet disposition. Burgess, unlikely as it may seem (certainly it appeared unlikely at the time), may well have been the most effective spy of the lot.

It is similarly interesting to observe Donald Maclean's steady rise in the Foreign Office hierarchy, unimpeded by his schizoid flights of alcoholic temper and sexual debauchery during which vitriolic anti-Americanism would pour out of him as if of cathartic necessity. This same undiplomatic diplomat was, in 1946, while first secretary at the British embassy in Washington, appointed as his government's representative on the top-secret *Anglo-American Combined Policy* Committee, where he had virtually unlimited access to information about nuclear development and

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atomic energy. Maclean, whose indiscretions were committed with a lack of subtlety that seemed to beg for discovery, apparently used to embark, briefcase in hand, on regular jaunts to New York to meet his Soviet contact—a commuter spy.

Philby seems the only one who took pains to cover his tracks. A cool pro-fascist dispatch published in the London *Times* during the Spanish Civil War—he was then a war correspondent—indicates the extent to which he was willing to go to deflect suspicion that his early, less than covert, flirtation with Communism was anything other than a youthful aberration. Philby wrote that the Basque city of Guernica was probably razed by the Basques themselves rather than by Nazi aircraft. Lying was apparently a natural skill, and one that manifested itself early on. But Philby had more reason than his colleagues to cultivate secrecy. His was a career in counterespionage, not simply in spying. And he was, in fact, well on his way up the intelligence ladder when the untimely defection of Burgess and Maclean focused suspicion on him and short-circuited his rise.

As this summary should indicate, a major question about the entire business is how it was possible that the three spies remained uncaught. Boyle has gone further than anyone else in an effort to solve this mystery. He leans toward the notion that the spies were well-protected, forewarned by sympathizers and/or Soviet "moles" placed in the highest echelon of the security establishment. Buttressed with information provided by the late literary critic Goronwy Rees, whom Burgess tried to draw into the ring, Boyle is highly suggestive about the possibility that Guy Liddell, deputy chief of MI-5 (the British Security Service), was one such protector. The charges against Liddell have now been aired explicitly in England in the *Times* and the *Observer*, and a number of retired intelligence officers have felt constrained to step forward and defend their old chief's posthumous reputation.

WHATEVER the truth about Liddell, it is clear that Maclean and Burgess could easily have been discovered, arrested, and prevented from fleeing. Undoubtedly their class origin and their social and political connections afforded a certain elementary security. But social factors alone cannot account for the "blunders" which enabled these men to escape. And the failure to act against Philby, who, despite the strength of evidence against him, evidently continued to work for the security services as a journalist in the Middle East until his own defection a decade later, remains inexplicable.

Perhaps what animated British officialdom was an altogether too pronounced desire to avoid scandal. Or perhaps, ironic though it may seem, the men of British intelligence shared the view of Hugh Trevor-Roper, himself a former member of the club, that spies are fundamentally insignificant. In the end, Boyle does not offer a definitive version of what transpired, though he does reconstruct the first defection in a careful and convincing manner.

It should be said that Trevor-Roper's contention, which others have espoused—including, in this country, defenders of the Rosenbergs—while undoubtedly attractive in its perversity, is simply untenable. There are indeed state secrets, unavailable from public sources. And these three traitors had access to secret information of considerable potential value to the Soviets. On the same point, Mrs. Thatcher's suggestion in the House of Commons that Anthony Blunt's treasonous activities did not result in the loss of any British lives is somewhat disingenuous. The implication is that the sort of spying Blunt did was relatively innocuous. In fact, as Goronwy Rees pointed out in his "deathbed confession" to Boyle, the emphasis should be on the word *British*: "What about the lives of Poles, of Finns, of Ukrainians, even of German Communists from 1940 until the invasion of Russia in mid-1941?" Rees quite rightly asks. Philby's cold-blooded acknowledgment that his betrayal of a group of postwar anti-Communist Albanian insurgents cost them their lives ought to be sufficient to demonstrate that even effete desk spies deal with matters affecting life and death.

Boyle knows this, and does a good job of refuting the notion that Philby's, Burgess's, and Maclean's spying had little impact other than to increase their sense of self-importance. British state papers would certainly reveal a great deal more about the damage done. But these are unlikely to be opened soon. And the FBI and CIA have also released only limited material. Boyle was in fact unable to draw major independent conclusions from the Freedom of Information Act documents. His reputed discovery of hidden treasures in the American archives, a claim repeated *ad nauseam* in British treatments of the Blunt affair and the book, is essentially nonsense. And the little that Boyle was able to extract from the files is virtually impossible to trace, given his tendency toward absurdly imprecise footnotes. Boyle's primary sources were people. Though his interviewing technique is no doubt superb, memories can prove unreliable, while the written word remains intact.

For this reason, among others, Boyle's ambitious project cannot be compared, either in methodology or meticulousness, to Allen Weinstein's *Perjury*, the magnum opus on the Alger Hiss case. Whether a similar work is required about men who, rather than protest their innocence, went off to live in cheery Moscow and in Black Sea dachas, is another question.

The Kabbalah Trip

PILGRIMAGE: ADVENTURES OF A WANDERING JEW. By PERLE EPSTEIN. *Houghton Mifflin. 364 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

SCHNEUR ZALMAN of Ladi, the founder of the Lubavitch hasidic dynasty, likened the roles of law and mysticism in Judaism to meat and salt. The law, he stated, was Judaism's basic substance, while mysticism both preserved the law

DAVID SINGER *is co-editor of the* American Jewish Year Book.

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and made it more palatable. Schneur Zalman was of the view that some generations required particularly heavy doses of salt, but he never lost sight of the fact that a religious diet consisting exclusively of the spice of mysticism was worthless. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of Perle Epstein, the author of *Pilgrimage: Adventures of a Wandering Jew*. She wants salt, and salt alone. As a result, Mrs. Epstein is unable to find spiritual nourishment in Judaism, and is forced to appease her religious appetite with an assortment of non-Jewish mysticisms.

In recent years, the attention of the Jewish community has been drawn to the phenomenon of young people from non-religious homes turning to a life of Jewish mystical piety, particularly in its hasidic variant. While the classical term *baal teshuvah* (penitent) has been applied to these "lost souls," it is, in fact, a misnomer, since they are not returning to a life of piety which they had previously abandoned. Were Perle Epstein to end her spiritual wandering, however, she would indeed be a *baalat teshuvah*, in that she is the product of an Orthodox home and education. As she puts it:

> My own upbringing was what in Jewish religious circles is called moderately Orthodox. . . . At home it meant punctilious observance of the *Halakhah*. . . . By some inexplicable quirk of fate [I] was enrolled in the most rigidly Orthodox girls' yeshiva . . . which tried hard but failed to mold me into a "modest Jewish wife and mother."

Although Mrs. Epstein left the Orthodox fold, she could not completely escape her religious upbringing. While in graduate school (this was during the early 1960's), she was drawn to various Eastern religious disciplines, and soon became a full-fledged enthusiast, practicing yoga, studying Indian philosophy, and seeking guidance from assorted gurus. At the same time, Mrs. Epstein felt a strong need to come to grips with her "reflexive Jewishness," her "childhood tic." What she ultimately sought was to become a "Jewish-Oriental mystic."

Mrs. Epstein takes care to dis-

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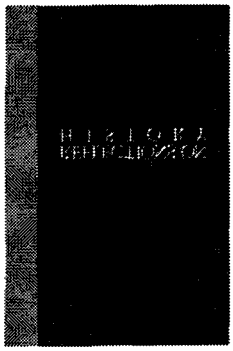

Reflections on History

By Jacob Burckhardt

Jacob Burckhardt, the nineteenth-century Swiss historian and humanist, was a friend of liberty and a skeptic of power. He foresaw the coming of collectivism, and Nietzsche found in Burckhardt an historian who "was not dominated by the general whims and dared to see things realistically." First translated into English in 1943, *Reflections on History* was previously published in the United States under the title *Force and Freedom*. With an introduction by Gottfried Dietze. "No one predicted the modern totalitarian state more accurately"—Reinhold Niebuhr in *The Nation*. "A guided tour through the history of civilization" —*Saturday Review of Literature*. Hardcover $9.00, Softcover $4.00.

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tance herself from the "new consciousness," the fashionable dabbling in mysticism that was part of the youth culture of the late 1960's and early 1970's. That was a period, she notes sarcastically, when "Indian gurus were being passed in the night by American adepts flying eastward; borscht-belt hotels were making way for monasteries housing sleek-headed Buddhists and tantric Babas." In "gazing eastward and inward," many of the devotees of the "new consciousness" were "merely escaping from too much luxury, too much violence." They were completely unmindful of a rather obvious question: "If we tossed aside our jeans for robes and our peanut butter for lentils and rice, if we no longer thought of ourselves as Jews and Christians but went around painting saffron dots above our noses, would that bring us any closer to enlightenment?"

For her part, Mrs. Epstein was determined to find the real thing, to achieve true enlightenment—"direct, subjective knowledge of the Absolute." She counts herself among those "passionate inquirers"—the true mystics—who "willingly experiment on their own bodies and minds in order to test what the orthodox passively accepted as authority and the skeptics denied out of hand." Regrettably, in Mrs. Epstein's case, the experiment proves a failure.

As a report on this failed experiment, *Pilgrimage* makes for sad reading. Mrs. Epstein describes at length her frenzied quest for mystical knowledge among the religions of the East, and, more particularly, her search for a guru who will show her the way to true enlightenment. Among her teachers are Yogi Bandhu, the former Murray Shwartz, who, though "barefoot, barechested, and clothed only in flouncy white cotton pantaloons," still speaks with a "natural Coney Island intonation"; the level-headed Narenda, who cautions Mrs. Epstein that "when a bear hibernates all winter, it still comes out of its den a bear, and not an enlightened saint"; the one-hundred-year-old Sri Singha, who chants Sufi hymns in a "sweet piping cricket's chirp" that leaves Mrs. Epstein disoriented for three days afterward; and the iconoclastic H.J. Shastri, his "blue-tinted hair . . . match[ing] his suit," who insists that consciousness itself is nothing but an illusion. Some of Mrs. Epstein's gurus are charlatans, others genuine holy men. In every case, however, they ultimately fail to provide her with lasting spiritual nourishment.

It is not really her teachers' fault. *Pilgrimage* makes it clear that Mrs. Epstein's religious quest is, in fact, a mission impossible. On the one hand, her total abhorrence of Jewish religious law (she calls it "life-hating") makes it impossible for her to find satisfaction in Judaism. On the other hand, her residual Jewishness prevents her from fully embracing Eastern spirituality. When she finally decides that she can "no longer avoid unearthing and examining [her] familiar traditions," she turns to the Kabbalah.

Mrs. Epstein's frantic search for a teacher to open up for her the mysteries of the Kabbalah has a madcap quality that would be humorous were it not so sad. She spends time with Nissan Rosenberg, the hip-hasidic folksinger, whose aim is to win back the "little holy brothers and sisters" from the "*swamilas* and *yogilas*." Mrs. Epstein attends a Passover seder at the home of Reb Yosef, a well-known "anti-establishment Hasid," whose "liberal approach toward ritual" includes distributing, besides pieces of matzah, "long, elegant joints." She dons a kerchief and a long-sleeved dress to gain access to Bratslaver Hasidim in Brooklyn and Jerusalem; to Rabbi Gaon, a miracle-working Kabbalist from Yemen, who tells her that she is destined to prepare the way for the Messiah; to Rabbi Gideon, who responds to her request to study meditative techniques by asking whether she can make noodle pudding; and to Shmuel, a toothless synagogue sexton who "swept the courtyard in daylight and communed with God

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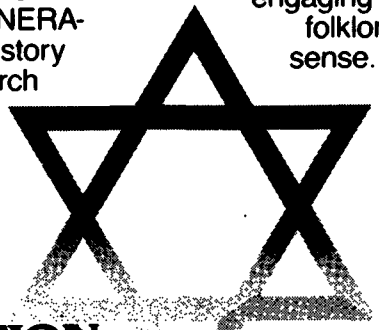

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in deepest mystery during the night." Mrs. Epstein even manages to locate one Dinah ben Aviv, a self-taught female Kabbalist who works as a *mikva* attendant.

In the end, she has little to show for her effort, and it could hardly have been otherwise, given the firm commitment of Jewish mysticism to *halakhic* observance and the reluctance of Kabbalists to share esoteric knowledge with a woman. Mrs. Epstein's dream of being the "first secular woman to delve into the Kabbalah and practice its complicated meditations without observing the law" is an empty fantasy. Her teachers, including the beloved Rav Bloch, her chief guide into the world of the Kabbalah, try to tell her so, but she refuses to listen. What she wants is a "tiny peek, a glimpse of old woolly beard on His flaming chariot" and not "dry, legalistic obsessions"; in short, the salt without the meat. Rav Bloch tells her: "*Halakhah* is the outer shell; Kabbalah has to do with *neshama* [soul] and *ruah hakodesh* [holy spirit]; and these entail a way of life that combines casting one's lot in with a 'nation of priests,' actually *living* the commandments, and Torah without any special meditations of a 'mystical' kind." To which Mrs. Epstein responds: "It was maddening. I could sooner fast for forty days than pray, sit [meditate] for fifteen hours without getting up rather than adhere to the religious laws." In a Jewish context, at least, such a diet leads to spiritual starvation.

American Establishment

PURITAN BOSTON AND QUAKER PHILADELPHIA: TWO PROTESTANT ETHICS AND THE SPIRIT OF CLASS AUTHORITY AND LEADERSHIP. By E. DIGBY BALTZELL. *Free Press. 585 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by MURRAY FRIEDMAN

E. DIGBY BALTZELL, the distinguished sociologist at the University of Pennsylvania, has made a specialty of examining the role of leadership elites in American life. Against the grain of the prevailing equalitarian ideal, Baltzell has argued that orderly social and political change throughout our history has come about through the efforts of a hereditary and hierarchical Protestant leadership class. He first offered this theory in his doctoral dissertation published in 1958 as *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class*, and then developed it further four years later, in *The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Class in America.* Here he described how the values and sense of mission of a patrician group of leaders, beginning with the Founding Fathers and continuing with Lincoln, Theodore Roose-

MURRAY FRIEDMAN *is Middle Atlantic States director of the American Jewish Committee and writes frequently on intergroup relations.*

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velt, Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, had been instrumental in shaping our institutions and developing far-sighted responses to economic and social problems.

In the same book, however, Baltzell expressed concern that the Protestant establishment responsible for these achievements had entered a period of decline, beginning in the later 19th and early 20th century, and was on the verge of becoming a mere caste system. The book was as much a plea by Baltzell, himself a member of an older-stock family, for the establishment to reassert its historic role as it was an important piece of social analysis. (In arguing, however, that the establishment should assimilate into its ranks "the best and the brightest" of racial and ethnic outsiders, the book also became a valuable tool in the hands of Jewish civil-rights groups battling discrimination in the country's "executive suites.")

By 1976, in a little noticed essay, "The Protestant Establishment Revisited" in the *American Scholar*, Baltzell all but acknowledged the defeat of his hopes for a resurgence of Protestant leadership, sorrowfully noting that the Ivy League universities and publications founded by older-stock elements (like Henry Luce's *Time*) were rushing to join the assault on American society: "The lack of, or declining faith in, an establishment soon spills over into a lack of faith in, and antipathy toward, all institutions."

Baltzell's present volume is an attempt to shed light on the origins of this malaise through a comparison of the cultural styles prevailing in the two heartlands of the Protestant establishment: Boston and Philadelphia. His view is that different models of leadership took shape in each of these communities, the one grounded in "pious Puritanism," the other in Quakerism. Both these legacies, he argues, have continued to cast their shadows on the upper classes of the two cities, on the new groups that came under their influence, and ultimately on America itself.

In general, Boston comes off better in this analysis. Though Puritan doctrine contained no objections to making money—indeed, to do so was a sign of belonging to God's elect—simply getting rich was frowned upon in Boston unless wealth, leisure, and social position were placed at the service of broader community goals. The laudable actions of the Boston lawyer, Joseph Welch, in cutting down a rampaging Senator Joseph McCarthy in the famous Army-McCarthy hearings of the 50's, or more recently the refusal of Archibald Cox (St. Paul's and Harvard) and Elliot Richardson (Milton and Harvard) to cooperate with President Nixon in the Watergate cover-up can all be traced, according to Baltzell, to the force of the Puritan idea of community responsibility on the part of the elite.

A strong elite, moreover, makes for a strong sense of community between the governing classes and the rest of the citizenry:

> Where class authority is strong, as in Massachusetts, the people tend to trust their men in authority as signified by the Massachusetts principle of judicial appointment and tenure for life during good behavior. Class authority, then, is a two-way street: where members of a class assume authority over a long period of time, the people will assume their right to authority too and political and judicial mores will in turn reflect upper-class values and gentlemen will be appointed and elected to high office.

Though sprung from the same Protestant root, the Philadelphia Quaker style, Baltzell maintains, has been more equalitarian and pragmatic than that of Boston, allowing the community to go its own way while guarding its class or group authority. If the Boston style has been communal and organic, the Philadelphia style has tended to extreme individualism leading to anarchy. Baltzell quotes approvingly de Tocqueville's comment that both anarchy and despotism proceed from the same cause, the "general apathy which is the consequence of individualism," and he suggests that this syndrome, which he connects with the Philadelphia model of Protestantism, has won out in America today:

The Quaker-Episcopal gentry of

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> Philadelphia have really never wanted the responsibilities of power and authority, and if the members of a privileged class decline to serve their communities over a long period of time, eventually those who want authority will be unable to obtain it. . . .

John Adams put it another way: "When authority and social cohesion decline, money alone talks."

One of Baltzell's main points is that despite Boston's unabashed social hierarchy, the democratic ideal has been more consistently favored there than in Philadelphia. This is because "gentlemen of authority inspired by values of service and excellence are likely to recognize new men of ability outside their ranks." Outsiders, including Jews like Louis Brandeis and Felix Frankfurter, were welcomed by the Boston elite and made Cambridge and Boston their home. As early as 1884, Boston elected its first Irish mayor while Philadelphia did not get around to doing so until 1963.

BALTZELL delineates with extraordinary richness of detail how each of the two cultures of Boston and Philadelphia has molded education, art, architecture, law, medicine, religion, and political life in its respective community. It is no accident, he suggests, that Harvard towers over its Ivy League counterpart, the University of Pennsylvania, or that Boston College is a nationally known Catholic school while St. Joseph's University remains a local institution. In medicine, Philadelphia took the lead early, producing more physicians and practitioners than Boston did, but Harvard can claim more deans, professors in medical schools, and specialists in advanced knowledge. In politics, there is no contest—Boston was the center of the anti-slavery movement as well as of movements for education, prison, and temperance reform, and Massachusetts gave the nation first families like the Adamses, the Lodges, and the Kennedys, while the best Philadelphia could come up with was the Kelly clan (of whom Princess Grace of Hollywood and Monaco is the most illustrious member).

But if Baltzell is right in declaring that cultural styles in these two important cities have helped to define our character and institutions, he also suffers somewhat from the "scholar's disease" of claiming too much for his thesis. Virginia, for example, which produced four out of the first five Presidents, contributed as much as Boston did to our national institutions, and one could easily argue that the anti-leadership model that seems to have triumphed in American life owes more to California and the Far West than to Quaker Philadelphia. Moreover, the erosion of Britain's leadership elite, as evidenced in recent spy scandals, suggests that the problem Baltzell is addressing goes beyond our shores.

More disturbing, however, is the note of patrician aloofness that

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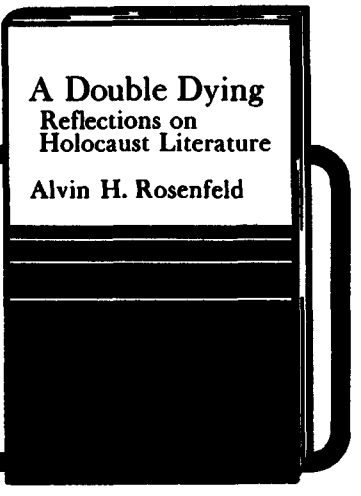

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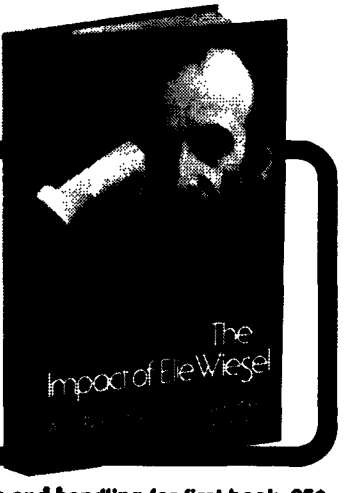

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characterizes Baltzell's work here, as it has done in the past. Only the old-style New England Protestant elite and the occasional outsider closely assimilated to its cultural norms seem capable, in his view, of providing authoritative leadership. Baltzell overlooks the fact that in absorbing men of talent in their ranks, the old Puritan oligarchy and its descendants have not been entirely disinterested. Whatever their loftier goals, they have also been conscious of the need both to reinvigorate the leadership class—which at crucial times could only be done by calling upon outsiders—and to coopt potential rivals to their authority. A number of historians have suggested recently that the progressive social-welfare legislation that Baltzell attributes to far-sighted patrician leaders like Franklin D. Roosevelt was actually pioneered by newer ethnic politicians like James Curley, Al Smith, and Senator Robert Wagner, and by Jews who staffed the New Deal agencies.

In any case, as an older, Eastern, Protestant elite has gone into eclipse, there are indications that the mantle of leadership is now being assumed by other groups: affluent and well-educated Catholics and Jews, the once despised evangelical Protestant elements in Sunbelt states, and a rising black middle class. And these "new people," operating in good part out of their own historical experiences, traditions, and values, are taking their direction neither from Puritan Boston nor from Quaker Philadelphia.

Revolutionary Ardor

COMRADE AND LOVER: ROSA LUXEMBURG'S LETTERS TO LEO JOGICHES. Edited and translated by ELZBIETA ETTINGER. *MIT Press. 206 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by MARK FALCOFF

THE career of Rosa Luxemburg spanned the final decade of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th, during which time she played a guiding role in the development of the European socialist movement, both in her native Poland, and more importantly, in imperial Germany. As a student, then as a journalist, speaker, and organizer, finally as an economist and theoretician (*The Accumulation of Capital*), she rose to dizzying heights, all the more remarkable for her being a woman, a Jew, and (in Germany) a foreigner. By 1904 she was one of the leading figures of the Second International, in whose commemorative photographs she is so easy to pick out—always the same tightly-corseted dresses and the ridiculously wide-brimmed hats, a kind of *gemütlich* version of the Kaiserin.

During World War I she belonged to the tiny minority of German Social Democrats who opposed participation in that conflict, and she spent some time in prison before being liberated on the fall of the imperial regime in November 1918. A few weeks later she helped to found what subsequently became the German Communist party, and she began laying plans for an insurrection which would continue in Germany what Lenin had already begun in Russia. In January 1919, she was brutally murdered in Berlin by right-wing thugs; the recipient of these letters, Leo Jogiches, met death at the same hands not long afterward.

The correspondence in this fascinating little book, superbly translated and very helpfully edited by Elzbieta Ettinger, covers only the years 1893 to 1914; it is sufficient, however, to plot the course of a deep personal drama. Leo Jogiches was, like Rosa Luxemburg, of Polish-Jewish parentage, although of somewhat more comfortable social and economic circumstances. Scion of a wealthy industrial family in Vilna, from whom he received regular and generous remittances, he never found it necessary to live by his pen or the platform. The two met in Zurich in 1890, where both were students. After an idyllic affair which lasted several years, they parted, living together only for brief (and mostly tempestuous) periods thereafter. In 1898, Rosa Luxemburg moved to Berlin, where she obtained German citizenship

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through an unconsummated marriage of convenience; much of her subsequent relationship with Jogiches was confined to the mails. (This book is but a tiny selection from a huge, three-volume set; unfortunately, none of Jogiches's responses has survived.)

THE letters fall into four quite distinct biographical periods. In the first (1893-97), Rosa Luxemburg is not only Jogiches's lover, but his ardent disciple in politics and philosophy. These letters reveal—with at times embarrassing explicitness—a passionate young woman quite willing to acknowledge frankly her emotional and physical needs. She repeatedly complains, for example, that his replies are full of nothing but dreary political talk, not a word about "us." In the second period (1898-1900), she begins to find an identity of her own in the ranks of German social democracy, but still longs for a meaningful personal life with her lover, who remains in Switzerland, ostensibly to complete work on his doctorate (he never did). In the third (1900-06), Rosa Luxemburg and Jogiches are finally together in Berlin, but the early magic of their relationship proves impossible to recapture. Instead, their life is an inferno of fights and reconciliations, against the background of which (and perhaps not unrelated to their domestic difficulties), Rosa Luxemburg begins to overshadow her lover decisively in the worlds of politics and journalism; now it is *she* whose letters are "all business."

In the final section (1907-14), Rosa Luxemburg has broken with Jogiches and taken up with a man twenty years her junior, the son of the German Marxist (and later Communist party luminary), Clara Zetkin. By this time the tone of the letters ranges from coldly hostile to crisply businesslike; at times she even refers to Jogiches in the third person, in order to avoid having to select between the familiar *Du* and the formal *Sie*, which, given their past relationship, would have been quite ludicrous. Even so, there are brief periods of comradely reconciliation, particularly in several remarkable letters from prison which Rosa Luxemburg, for reasons of censorship, was required to phrase as if they were intended for another woman. Throughout the entire life of their relationship, the one thing which does not change is Rosa Luxemburg's dependence upon Jogiches for financial support; her appeals for money are quite open and undisguised in the early periods; in the final phase, they are made in the name of "the party."

THIS collection is obviously of considerable value to any student of Rosa Luxemburg, but quite possibly it will be of even greater interest to those who would understand the phenomenon of German social democracy in the period before World War I. For one thing, they point to the existence of an intra-history of that movement which has yet to be written. In her letters, Rosa Luxemburg unintentionally reveals that pre-war German socialism—for all its revolutionary rhetoric and aspirations—was in many ways a perfect mirror-image of the stultifying Victorian order it sought to overthrow—complete with its own "high society" (the Kautskys, the Bebels, the Eisners), its time-serving mediocrities, predictable trajectories of advancement, exaggerated concern for rank and precedent, petty rivalries, jealousies, and conspiracies. In fact, by figuratively squinting a bit, it is not all that difficult to "read" Rosa Luxemburg's rise in terms not very different from that of a young woman in today's corporate world—carrying on a perpetual debate within herself (and with others) on the proper proportions of assertiveness and femininity necessary both to get ahead and to find personal fulfillment. One cannot help wondering how many potentially able and energetic collaborators Wilhelmine Germany blindly pushed into the socialist opposition; while the depth of Rosa Luxemburg's own ideological commitment is not to be doubted, where,

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after all, could an ambitious young woman (and an outsider at that) have found a "career" in that society, except within the ranks of the party?

These letters also show that socialists had their own vision of the good life, but far from reflecting the dreams of Karl Marx, it bore a surprising resemblance to that already enjoyed by the hated bourgeoisie. Here is Rosa Luxemburg (March 6, 1899):

> Our own small apartment, our own nice furniture, our own library; quiet and regular work, walks together, an opera from time to time, a small, *very* small circle of friends who can sometimes be invited for dinner; every year a summer vacation in the country, one month with absolutely no work! . . . And perhaps even a little, a very little baby?

There is much talk in this book about apartments, hats, gloves, dresses, china, flatware, flowers, the difficulty of finding good servants, as well as the recurring theme of children. "I constantly feel the need for a child—sometimes it gets unbearable. *You*," she reproaches Jogiches, "probably could never understand this" (December 17, 1899). In one of the most wrenching passages in the entire correspondence, she describes how a little girl came up to her in a park and buried her face in Rosa Luxemburg's ample skirts; the great revolutionary frankly confessed to Jogiches that she had trouble resisting an impulse to kidnap the child for her own. Rosa Luxemburg could not know, of course, that in the fullness of time it would be considered somewhat improper for a Marxist feminist to utter such statements, even *in camera*, but of course she had the good fortune to live in a sort of prelapsarian period of both the socialist and women's movements, when everything and anything could seem both possible and reconcilable.

IN THE introduction, the editor of these letters, like so many admirers of Rosa Luxemburg, suggests that her death deprived European Marxism of a priceless fund of conscience. To this end she reproduces the famous statement in which Rosa Luxemburg criticized Lenin and Trotsky to the effect that

> socialism, by its very nature, cannot be dictated, introduced by command. . . . [Lenin] is completely mistaken in the means he employs. . . . In reality the power is executed by a dozen outstanding minds while the elite of the working class are now and then invited to meetings in order to applaud the speeches of the leaders and to approve unanimously proposed resolutions. In fact, then, it is a clique, certainly a dictatorship, not, however, the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that of a handful of politicians.

This is supposed to show, apparently, that Rosa Luxemburg represents a severed link with "socialism with a human face." In reality, however, Rosa Luxemburg herself was an unyielding practitioner of "democratic centralism," and if she found Lenin's experiment unimpressive, it was because, as a consistent Marxist, she could not accept the possibility of socialism in a backward, largely nonindustrial country. It was in Germany that she placed her hopes for the "true" socialist revolution; she died in the effort to bring it to birth.

At the time of her murder, Rosa Luxemburg was only forty-nine years old. Thus it is not difficult to think that—had she emerged from the bloody days of 1919 Berlin—she might have survived into the 1930's. But it is hard to imagine where her subsequent career would have led. Had she remained in Germany, she would have perished at the hands of the Nazis. Had she fled to the Soviet Union, as did many leaders of the German Communist party after 1933, it is extremely likely that, as a woman of independent temperment and considerable intellectual integrity—and as a cosmopolitan Jew as well—she would have perished in Stalin's purges. Nor is it easy to conceive of her joining Trotsky in Mexico, or taking refuge in England or the United States to tend a socialist archive or lecture at universities.

Perhaps mercifully, Rosa Luxemburg vanished almost simultaneously with her pre-war world, one in which, as an outsider, she could find a place only in a movement of

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outsiders (the SPD). After 1919, both the Second and Third Internationals became identified with governments and their policies. Tragic as was the manner of her death, at least it rescued her from the compromised bourne of choice to repose in a socialist pantheon, where the nettlesome issues of freedom and necessity, order and movement, means and ends, need never be confronted or resolved.

Going to Pot

HIGH CULTURE. By WILLIAM NOVAK. *Knopf. 228 pp. $12.95.*
GRASS ROOTS. By ALBERT GOLDMAN. *Harper & Row. 262 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by NAOMI DECTER

FIFTEEN years ago, marijuana was the drug of the alienated and daring few. Today, smoking dope has made it into the mass culture. The sweet smell of grass permeates movie houses on Saturday nights, rolling papers are on sale in the supermarket, and joints are passed with the chip dip at parties.

The two most recent books on the subject, William Novak's *High Culture* and Albert Goldman's *Grass Roots,* seem to set the final seal of legitimacy on the democratization of pot. They provide the hitherto missing element without which no experience exists as a truly American phenomenon: *High Culture* is marijuana's first experiential survey based on interviews and questionnaires; *Grass Roots* is the first scholarly treatise on the history, cultivation, and smuggling of marijuana.

High Culture arose directly from Novak's own experience with the drug. Having found it to be, in his case, "an intellectual stimulant" and "a useful tool in breaking down certain conceptual boundaries that . . . kept out more light than they let in," Novak remained curious about its effect on others. And so he set about gathering in-

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formation, talking personally to about a hundred people, and reaching some three hundred more with a written questionnaire. *High Culture* is the synthesis of those interviews, along with the scientific background, and some of Novak's thoughts on the matter; it is, in short, an attempt at a detached journalistic view of marijuana in America.

"Despite some progress in recent years," Novak writes, "the degree of ignorance about marijuana . . . on the part of the non-using public remains formidable. It is comparable, perhaps, to what most Soviet citizens might understand about the nature of a free and democratic society." This distressing state of affairs has its roots in the rigid attitude of Western society toward marijuana and other drugs.

The primary component of our rigidity—and the one most difficult for marijuana users to accept—is the "common and convenient myth that holds that there is only one real and operative form of consciousness [and that] other forms . . . be they dreams, physical sensations, drug-induced states, hypnosis, precognition, or intuition, have been . . . considered to be distortions and aberrations." Novak and his subjects know better, at least in the matter of drug-induced states; as one respondent explains, " 'Marijuana has helped me to see the phenomenal power of *plural*. . . . There is more than one way to look at something.' "

Such profundity of insight is not uncommon among marijuana users. And, with characteristic generosity, many were willing to share their revelations. " 'You share heaven,' " one smoker realized while stoned, " 'with everybody you've ever been in a photograph with.' " " 'Tonight,' " recounts another,

> "I feel free and easy, and I take a longer shower [than usual]. I start thinking about how sometimes you have to look for the barrier on the road (in this case, the short shower rule), take it off the road (examine it closely), drive your car through that spot (violate the rule), and then put the barrier back on the road for the next person (actually, for yourself, the next time you travel this path)."

Curiously, Novak muses, the claim that pot produces insights is not universally accepted in the marijuana community. There is, in fact, considerable disagreement on the question, as there is in regard to marijuana's connection to creativity. One young writer, who composes all her stories under the influence, has found that " 'Coupled with good music, marijuana relaxes the control I try to harness to the creative flow and lets the idea develop itself, producing a more natural story.' " Others find that relaxation interferes with their work. There is, however, a consensus about marijuana as an aid to creative *thinking*. As one painter puts it, " 'I've got a heavy sense of scruples about marijuana when it comes to the production of art. But

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art *appreciation* is another matter. The weed is definitely an enhancer there, and spurs *ideas* like crazy.' "

Nor is the power of enhancement limited to the realm of the intellect. Novak reports, for example, that when stoned, "Murray and Judy . . . both mental-health professionals . . . find themselves experiencing a profound sense of closeness . . . that led directly to their decision to get married." Judy first became aware of this intimacy "one summer evening, where for three hours she felt a concentrated closeness that she had never felt before. 'I felt totally understood by Murray,' she recalls." More important, " 'during that first stoned encounter I was able to make interpretations to him about his mother, which I could never say to him in our normal life without getting belted. But stoned, I felt free to say these things, and, equally important, he was able to hear them.' "

Even as it stimulates the intellect and enriches the spirit, moreover, marijuana adds something to the most trivial daily activities. Food tastes better, music sounds better, sex feels better, when you're stoned. Sports are more invigorating, games are more interesting, and parties are more fun, when you're stoned. In fact, as one user succinctly puts it, " 'The major effect of marijuana is that it makes people feel good.' "

Feeling good may be the major effect of the drug, but Novak acknowledges that there are those who fear that the *side* effects are far less pleasant. Some scientific studies, he admits, have found that marijuana can have adverse effects on the bodies and brains of users —as well as on their offspring. But he cautions that "Unfortunately, the history of marijuana research includes numerous attempts to make the facts conform to certain prejudices on the part of the researchers."

It seems, indeed, that every study resulting in findings unfavorable to marijuana has relied on questionable testing techniques or faulty reasoning. For every such study he cites, Novak is also able to quote "critics" (albeit anonymous ones) who deplore the lack of control groups or the strengths of the dosage used. He can also cite studies that find marijuana harmless, and of which, apparently, no critics, anonymous or otherwise, exist. Users will no doubt be comforted to know that researchers who have discovered no danger in the drug appear untainted by prejudice. Novak does leave us, however, with one niggling doubt about marijuana's safety: "Many smokers," he reports, "who are otherwise sensitive to matters of health and nutrition will indulge in junk food after smoking marijuana."

If *High Culture* is the product of William Novak's personal curiosity, *Grass Roots* can only be viewed as a creature of sociological curiosity. Albert Goldman, author of a biography of Lenny Bruce, de-

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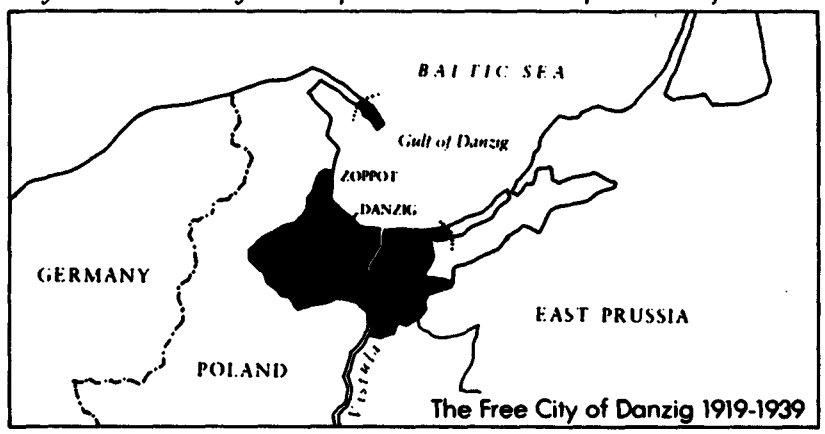

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scribes himself as "one of America's few full-time students of the counterculture." Since that selfsame counterculture has successfully infiltrated the general culture on many fronts, and since marijuana and marijuana smuggling are integral parts of the counterculture, Goldman felt it was time someone looked into the "Dope Game."

No description of *Grass Roots* could do it better justice than the author's modest introduction. "Though the marijuana world is much too vast for any man to ever survey completely," he writes, "I think I covered the ground as thoroughly as any Ph.D. candidate has ever covered his field of specialization." Indeed, *Grass Roots* is as tediously detailed as any doctoral dissertation on the development of the linseed-oil industry.

Goldman reports, for example, that there is archeological evidence, uncovered recently in Russia, of hemp-smoking among the Scythians in the 5th century B.C.E. Marco Polo heard about hashish smokers in Persia in the 13th century. And there was a Bantu tribe in the Belgian Congo that replaced idol worship with hash. Such heterogeneity can lead to only one conclusion: "The history of dope reduces eventually to the history of culture, and at last it becomes clear that instead of man being the slave of drugs, drugs are the slaves of man."

Having established the historical background, Goldman sets off on his journey through the labyrinth of marijuana smuggling. He himself went down to Colombia, made the right connections, and learned all there is to know about the business. "I got as close to the action on both sides of the line," he reveals, "as a writer can without compromising himself morally or getting killed." Goldman does not hesitate to share every breathless moment of his experience—to say nothing of this new area of expertise. He ponders the relative merits of airborne and shipboard smuggling; discusses the best techniques for packaging and storage; and even offers a financial tip or two: "So long as you're doing the job . . . there is no reason in the world why you shouldn't make a lot more money if you have the balls to throw on top of your load a little garbage bag full of cocaine."

Cocaine and the marijuana trade are connected in more ways than one. As Goldman points out, "We are witnessing currently an epidemic of cocaine usage, which would have been hard to imagine before the widespread experimentation with marijuana and other drugs in the 60's. . . . Once one has pleasured himself with one drug, he is naturally well disposed to the idea of drug usage in general." This is the only side effect of marijuana that gives Mr. Goldman pause—momentarily. He dismisses most of the others—such as brain damage and chromosome damage—as "the latest medical horror stories," and concludes that "marijuana has proven to be a relatively harmless substance."

The only ills, in fact, that Goldman ascribes to marijuana are the consequence of its illegality. The U.S. government's refusal to decriminalize marijuana has led to corruption in Colombia, as well as to the poisoning of tons of grass and of an unspecified number of people with the herbicide paraquat. If, as Goldman claims, "The paraquat scandal provides . . . the first and only confirmation of the alleged dangers of smoking marijuana," obviously the only way to guarantee the drug's safety is to decriminalize it.

"Marijuana should be a source of pleasure, not of pain and shame," Goldman contends. "We should be free to cultivate and sell and buy this harmless euphoriant. . . . When will we learn that in a democracy it is for the people to tell the government, not for the government to tell the people, what makes them happy?"

ALBERT GOLDMAN would have us believe, then—despite his own assertion that marijuana use leads to heavier drugs, and despite recent evidence of a virtual epidemic of marijuana addiction among young children, to the severe detriment of their mental and emotional health—that marijuana is merely a "harmless euphoriant." William Novak would like us to accept the self-involved and pretentious dithering of his subjects as evidence of the wisdom, kindliness, and psychic health the drug can inspire. That both should feel obliged to defend so strenuously—and so deceitfully—a drug which by now is as readily available and as widely accepted as aspirin suggests that the truth about marijuana is other than what they propose, and that they know it.

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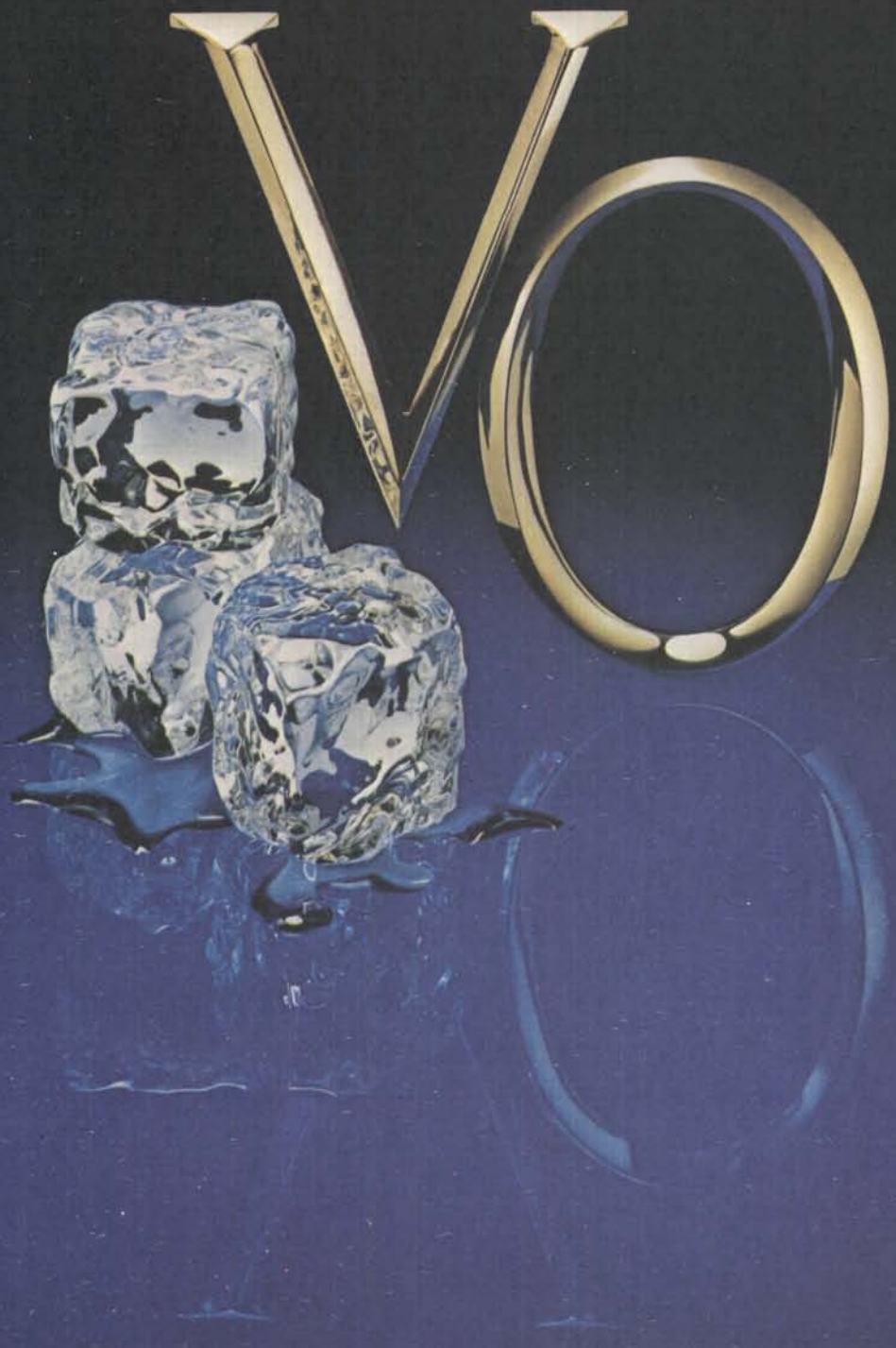

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